



Jews, Christians, and the Roman Empire

The Poetics of Power in Late Antiquity

Edited by

Natalie B. Dohrmann and Annette Yoshiko Reed

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Jews, Christians,
and the Roman Empire

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and the
ROMAN EMPIRE

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CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations	ix
Introduction: Rethinking Romanness, Provincializing Christendom <i>Annette Yoshiko Reed and Natalie B. Dohrmann</i>	i
 PART I. RABBIS AND OTHER ROMAN SUB-ELITES	 23
1. The Afterlives of the Torah's Ethnic Language: The Sifra and Clement on Leviticus 18.1–5 <i>Beth A. Berkowitz</i>	29
2. The Kingdom of Edessa and the Creation of a Christian Aristocracy <i>William Adler</i>	43
3. Law and Imperial Idioms: Rabbinic Legalism in a Roman World <i>Natalie B. Dohrmann</i>	63
4. The Law of Moses and the Jews: Rabbis, Ethnic Marking, and Romanization <i>Hayim Lapin</i>	79
 PART II. CHRISTIANIZATION AND OTHER MODALITIES OF ROMANIZATION	 93
5. There Is No Place Like Home: Rabbinic Responses to the Christianization of Palestine <i>Joshua Levinson</i>	99

6. Between Gaza and Minorca: The (Un)Making of Minorities in Late Antiquity <i>Hagith Sivan</i>	121
7. Christian Historiographers' Reflections on Jewish-Christian Violence in Fifth-Century Alexandria <i>Oded Irshai</i>	137
8. Narrating Salvation: Verbal Sacrifices in Late Antique Liturgical Poetry <i>Ophir Münz-Manor</i>	154
9. Israelite Kingship, Christian Rome, and the Jewish Imperial Imagination: Midrashic Precursors to the Medieval "Throne of Solomon" <i>Ra'anan Boustán</i>	167
PART III. CONTINUITY AND RUPTURE	183
10. Chains of Tradition from <i>Avot</i> to the <i>'Avodah Piyutim</i> <i>Michael D. Swartz</i>	189
11. Change and Continuity in Late Legal Papyri from Palaestina Tertia: <i>Nomos Hellênikos</i> and <i>Ethos Rômaikon</i> <i>Hannah M. Cotton</i>	209
12. The Representation of the Temple and Jerusalem in Jewish and Christian Houses of Prayer in the Holy Land in Late Antiquity <i>Rina Talgam</i>	222
13. Roman Christianity and the Post-Roman West: The Social Correlates of the <i>Contra Iudaeos</i> Tradition <i>Paula Fredriksen</i>	249
Notes	267
Select Bibliography of Secondary Sources	345

List of Contributors	379
Index	383
Acknowledgments	389

A B B R E V I A T I O N S

<i>CJ</i>	<i>The Justinian Code, Codex Justinianus</i> , ed. P. Krüger (Berlin, 1877, 1929 ¹⁰).
<i>CTh</i>	<i>The Theodosian Code</i> , ed. T. Mommsen and P. M. Meyer, <i>Theodosiani libri XVI</i> (Berlin, 1905); trans. C. Pharr, <i>The Theodosian Code and Novels: And the Sirmondian Constitutions</i> (2nd ed.; Union, N.J., 2001 [1952]).
Egeria	<i>Itinerarium Egeriae</i> , John Wilkinson, <i>Egeria's Travels</i> (3rd ed.; Warminster, 1999).
Eusebius, <i>DE</i>	Eusebius, <i>Demonstratio evangelica</i> , ed. I. Heikel, GCS Eusebius Werke 4 (Leipzig, 1913).
Eusebius, <i>HE</i>	Eusebius, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i> , ed. E. Schwartz and T. Mommsen, GCS N.F. 6 (2nd ed.; Berlin, 1999); trans. G. A. Williamson (New York, 1965).
Eusebius, <i>PE</i>	Eusebius, <i>Praeparatio evangelica</i> , ed. K. Mras, GCS 43.1–2 (Berlin, 1954–1956).
Eusebius, <i>VC</i>	Eusebius, <i>Vita Constantini</i> , ed. F. Winkelmann, GCS Eusebius Werke 1.1 (2nd ed.; Berlin, 1991); trans. Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall, <i>Eusebius: Life of Constantine</i> (Oxford, 1999).
<i>JLA</i>	<i>Journal of Late Antiquity</i>
<i>LAA</i>	Late Antique Archaeology
<i>Sirm.</i>	<i>Constitutiones Sirmondianae</i> , ed. T. Mommsen and P. M. Meyer, <i>Theodosiani libri XVI cum constitutionibus sirmondianis</i> (Berlin, 1905); trans. C. Pharr (Union, N.J., 2001 [1952]).
Socrates, <i>HE</i>	Socrates of Constantinople, <i>Histoire ecclésiastique</i> , ed. G. C. Hansen, 4 vols., SC 477, 493, 505, 506 (Paris, 2004–2007).

Sozomen, *HE* Sozomen, *Historia ecclesiastica*, ed. J. Bidez and G. C. Hansen, GCS 50 (Berlin, 1960).

TCH Transformation of the Classical Heritage

Abbreviations for rabbinic literature follow the *Jewish Quarterly Review* (<http://jqr.pennpress.org/PennPress/journals/jqr/styleguide.pdf>).

Abbreviations for Classics journals and book series follow *L'Année philologique* (http://www.annee-philologique.com/files/sigles_fr.pdf).

Abbreviations for other primary sources, journals, and book series follow *The SBL Handbook of Style* (Peabody, Mass., 1999).

INTRODUCTION

Rethinking Romanness, Provincializing Christendom

ANNETTE YOSHIKO REED AND NATALIE B. DOHRMANN

In memory of Alan Segal (1945–2011) and Thomas Sizgorich (1970–2011)

In histories of ancient Jews and Judaism, the Roman Empire looms large. Already in 1 and 2 Maccabees, Roman power is figured as a factor in the negotiation of *Ioudaismos* and *Hellenismos*, and at least since Flavius Josephus, the writing of Jewish history in Greek presumes a Roman gaze. Since Josephus, moreover, the first Jewish revolt against Rome (66–73 CE) has been a primary pivot and problem for recounting the fate of the Jewish people under foreign rule. The revolt serves as the stormy horizon for the *Judaean War* and *Antiquities* alike—two works that represent the culmination of Hellenistic Jewish historiography but also the last known Jewish-authored historical writings until the Middle Ages.

To be sure, much ancient Jewish literature effaces the specificity of Roman rule. In the apocalyptic imagination, Rome could be collapsed into Babylon; and in the midrashic imagination, Jewish life in the Roman Empire could be folded into the Deuteronomistic dichotomy of Israel and the nations. Among some rabbis, their relationship could even be reread as a rivalry between two commensurate powers, like the wrestling of Jacob and Esau.¹ Nevertheless, in the Sages' Edom—as in the *Kitim* of the Qumran literature and in the blurred Babylon-cum-Rome of 4 Ezra and Revelation—we glimpse hints of engagement with a distinctive imperial culture, not so neatly mapped onto biblical models or onto the historical precedents provided by Assyrian, Babylonian, Achaemenid, Ptolemaic, or Seleucid rule.² Furthermore, as much as a fantasy of isolation envelops the literature of Palestinian rabbis, the ideal

of separateness may betray something of the Romanness of its motives and settings. That Roman power is implicated in rabbinic authority, after all, is suggested in the origin myths of the rabbis themselves, wherein the establishment of Yavneh is retrospectively tied to the Roman razing of Jerusalem, as Judaism resurrected—with Roman imperial ratification—from the ashes of the Second Temple.³

The present volume attends to such paradoxes, subtleties, and ironies of empire, supplementing the scholarly discussion about conflicts or contrasts between ancient Jews and Romans, with reflections on the experiences of ancient Jews as Romans.⁴ Much distinguished Jews from others in the Roman Empire, and there is no dearth of sophisticated studies exploring the ramifications of such differences for Jews and Christians in the Land of Israel as well as the Diaspora.⁵ It remains, however, that Rome is also the functioning context of almost all early Jewish and Christian literature. Recent attention to the Sasanian Persian settings of the major exceptions to this pattern—the Babylonian Talmud and Syriac Christian literature—serves to sharpen, by comparison, our sense of the Romanness of so much of the surviving evidence for ancient Judaism and Christianity.⁶

Not only is Palestinian Judaism our best-attested example of a Roman provincial culture, but the situation, stance, and strategies of Palestinian rabbis share much more than is commonly noted with Greek, Syrian, Egyptian, and other local sub-elites who simultaneously subverted, absorbed, and manipulated Roman norms. The essays in this volume address such overlaps—highlighting the Romanness of rabbis and other late antique Jews living in the empire, revisiting issues of Jewish and Christian difference in triangulation with Greek prestige and Roman power, and grappling anew with the Christianization of the Roman Empire by considering the role of Jews (real and imagined) in developments traditionally studied in terms of Christians and “pagans.”

It is a timely moment to try to make sense of the simultaneous Roman-ness and Jewishness of ancient Jews in the Roman Empire. It is also a timely moment to explore the implications of their typicality and exceptionalism for understanding the meaning and limits of Roman power, on the one hand, and the parallel paradox of persecuted and imperialized Christianity, on the other. In recent decades, subjects of empire have attracted fresh attention within the fields of Jewish Studies, Classics, and Late Antiquity, inspired in part by postcolonial theorists pressed by modern examples to retheorize agency, destabilize the idea of identity at center and periphery, and highlight the role of

local elites in producing the illusion of imperial stability.⁷ Such work reminds us that no text can be fully understood apart from the power relations in which its authors and readers are imbricated and implicated. At the same time, another dominant theoretical trend—the discursive or linguistic turn—has pushed us to recall the opposite: particularly for those of us who study the past, any understanding of the power at play *behind* texts is primarily accessible through engagement with the power at play *within* texts—the sticky and intricate webs woven by their poetics.⁸

Such theoretical “turns” have resulted in nothing quite so sweeping as the paradigm shifts in research on ancient Judaism and Christianity in the wake of World War II.⁹ Here, as elsewhere, the dramatic revisionism of the late twentieth century has now given way to deeper rethinkings with more gradual and incremental gains. Nevertheless, the ramifications are perhaps no less significant—not least for opening new types of conversations between social historians of Judaism and scholars of Jewish literature, as well as among specialists in ancient Judaism, Christianity, and the Roman Empire. Accordingly, our concern in this volume is not to promote, debate, or critique any one model or perspective, nor to forefront the data of any single genre, corpus, medium, or locale. What we seek to convey, rather, are multiple efforts at reorientation, in direct or indirect engagement with the hermeneutical and historiographical challenges noted above, but—above all—guided by problems in specific sets of evidence. Not only do the contributors resist romantic narratives about dramatic difference or intractable change, but they draw our attention to the textures of different relevant data for the period, evoking something of the warp and woof of Jewish and Christian life under Roman imperial rule.

As much as the chapters in this volume concern themselves with Jews, Christians, and other Romans, the reader will find little in the way of traditional modes and models of comparison, as predicated on the parallel analysis of “religions,” “identities,” or “cultures,” projected as discrete yet commensurable entities. Sidestepping questions about determination of the priority and directionality of influence,¹⁰ our contributors press on to explore more subtle and surprising patterns—ambivalences and asymmetries, ironies and reversals, differences predicated on similarity and similarities predicated on difference. If contributors resist the older temptation to reduce the Jewishness of a text or group to some point along an imagined axis of reaction to a “Graeco-Roman context,” they also avoid easy recourse to more recent truisms concerning identity as constructed through the discourse of alterity.¹¹ What is here brought to the fore are case studies that reveal some of the telling tensions

that Romanness could produce for Jewishness and Christianness—as attested even (especially?) within those types of data most readily aligned with one or another seemingly self-contained tradition. A mishnah, liturgical poem, marriage contract, or synagogue fresco might appear to be sufficiently explained by its rabbinic or Jewish context. But, as we shall see, they may disclose another script or strategy of meaning when set alongside contemporaneous Roman or Christian evidence.¹² Likewise, the allusive Christianness of a sophist or philosopher of the third century, or the seemingly confident triumphalism of a bishop or biographer of the fourth and fifth, may disclose different dynamics to those attentive to the long shadows cast by Roman power, local politics, or the ever-present Jewish past.¹³

That so much of ancient Jewish literature emerged under Roman rule is well known. Nevertheless, just as Jews are frequently dismissed as atypical by scholars of Roman history, so Rome still remains invisible or occluded in a surprising proportion of studies on Jewish materials written under Roman rule and/or by Roman citizens. To lay the groundwork for the essays that follow, thus, we would like to reflect upon some of the reasons for Rome's marginalization in past research on Judaism and to highlight some of what is at stake in recovering a sense of its ubiquity, even in the world of late antique rabbis. The scholarly bracketing of Rome is telling—we suggest—inasmuch as it replicates the rhetorical stances and strategies found in many of our ancient sources; if the poetics of power in the Roman Empire are skewed or flattened by modern labels like “Graeco-Roman,” the persistence and persuasiveness of the distortion attest the power of poetics—the continued force of those ancient Jewish and Christian writings that relativize Rome and mount totalizing claims of their own. Recognizing and contextualizing the rhetoric of our ancient literary sources may open new perspectives on even some sources that do not explicitly address, contest, or represent Rome or empire. In the process, we hope to clear the way for bringing Jewish evidence to bear both on the reciprocities of provincial Romanization and on their particular mutations in Christianization.

Rethinking Romanness

The mound of books on Jewish history containing the hyphenate “Graeco-Roman” in their titles attests a scholarly habit, whereby Hellenistic and Roman empires are often conflated to provide a seemingly stable “pagan” backdrop to

the drama of Second Temple Judaism, the origins and spread of Christianity, and the rise of the rabbinic movement in Late Antiquity. Of course, the phrase resonates with elements of ancient experience; one might cite the serial proximity of Ptolemaic, Seleucid, and Roman imperial regimes, the topographical overlay of Roman territory with Greek building styles, the prevalence of Greek as the language of Roman provincial power and law, or the place of Hellenistic *paideia* in the making of Roman elites. Indeed, seen from some perspectives, Greek knowledge might appear to enliven Roman power, providing the cultural capital, intellectual prestige, or epistemological legitimization for the empire's military, bureaucratic, and legal mechanisms.¹⁴ Many Jewish and Christian authors seem to suggest as much: in those moments when they did not find themselves face-to-face with Roman soldiers, tax collectors, or tribunals, what they most often contest is not Roman hegemony but rather Greek culture and knowledge.¹⁵

It remains, however, that Rome did have culture and knowledge that was not Greek, and its cultural and epistemological imperialism was intimately tied to its political power.¹⁶ Nor can we imagine an ancient subject who would have perceived Greekness and Romanness as a seamless pair. Rome may have conquered and absorbed Greek territories and entrusted learned Greeks to train its elites, but Latin literature resounds with the ultimate moral superiority of Rome and its disdain for its effete precursor. Already in the first century, Valerius Maximus notes of the Romans who found methods to master both Greek and Greeks: "It was unworthy, they felt, for the weight and authority of empire to be granted to the seductive charm of literature."¹⁷ Conversely, as studies on the Second Sophistic have richly shown, ambitious intellectuals could resist Roman power precisely by performing Greekness.¹⁸ In short, the notion of "Graeco-Roman" would have been a fraught one—to the extent that it existed at all—for a Greek geographer like Strabo, a Roman satirist like Juvenal, a Jewish historian like Josephus, an Anatolian holy man like Apollonius, or Syrian priests like Iamblichus and Elagabalus.

Nevertheless, it remains common in scholarship on Judaism and Christianity to conflate Roman with Greek. Their blurring is perhaps naturalized by typological habit. As if stumbling into Nebuchadnezzar's dream, we collapse empire into empire. Such moves, after all, are widespread in our sources, beginning with the Hebrew Bible and ranging from apocalyptic traditions of the Qumran sectarians, Jesus movement, and other Second Temple Jews, to the biblical interpretation of rabbis and church fathers. The pervasiveness of the strategy may hint at its effectiveness for consolation or cognitive mastery—as if

poetics might rewrite power. Yet the strategy's persuasiveness also poses a special danger to modern scholars, tempting us to project homogeneity and stasis onto social and political landscapes characterized by instability, particularity, and change.

For those of us who study Jewish and Christian literature, it may be too easy to imagine a world split between "Jew" and "Greek" precisely because so many of our sources divide reality along such lines.¹⁹ The totalizing rhetoric of "Jew" and "Greek" maps readily onto earlier dichotomies (for example, Israel versus the nations, barbarian versus Greek), and it does important work even in the writings of a Roman citizen like Paul—and even when he is defending his Jewish lineage and Christ belief to a community of Romans.²⁰ Even an author with as much firsthand experience of Roman power as Josephus writes his apology for Judaism primarily against "the Greeks."²¹ Something similar appears in Christian apologies ostensibly addressed to Roman rulers, such as those of Justin Martyr, a Samaritan émigré to Rome.²² The power of the binary "Jew"/"Greek" persists for Syrians like Tatian, Alexandrians like Clement and Origen, and North Africans like Tertullian and Augustine—all living in an increasingly Romanized world.²³

It was from third-century Carthage, for instance, that Tertullian posed his famous question: "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" The question has been quoted and paraphrased by generations of scholars of Christianity and Judaism interested in the encounter of biblical and classical knowledge. Less often noted is the fact that—as Glen Bowersock remarks—"the third-century sophist . . . posed his question about Jerusalem in Rome's own language."²⁴ Here, as elsewhere, transhistorical and transregional continuities in the Jewish and Christian poetics of difference can distract from the workings of Roman power and its cultural effects, in particular local arenas.

Like the conflation of world empires in our ancient sources, the persistent hyphenate "Graeco-Roman" in modern scholarship can mask both the pre-eminence and the particularity of the Roman Empire. The ubiquity of empire is richly attested in non-Jewish and non-Christian sources, including, but not limited to, documentary and other material data. Yet, as Brent Shaw, Michael Peachin, and others have demonstrated, Roman rule broke from older models of rule, introducing bureaucratic and other innovations that proved inexorably effective but also incommensurate with native systems and notions of power in the eastern Mediterranean and Near East.²⁵ The modern scholar trained in Jewish Studies might thus find himself in a position like that of Josephus, who writes of Roman power and politics in relation to war but

tackles questions of culture with primary reference to “the Greeks”—finding it easier, perhaps, to engage Apion’s Alexandrian pride than to grapple with the incomprehensible order of Roman political or administrative structures or legal bureaucracy.²⁶ Likewise, in modern research on Judaism and Christianity, there has been much attention to moments of clash and conflict between Jews and the Roman Empire, particularly in relation to the first Jewish Revolt and the Bar Kokhba Revolt.²⁷ Outside of studies of taxation, however, little has been done to bring the everyday workings of Roman power and culture to bear on ancient Jews and Judaism.

When situating Jews in “Graeco-Roman” cultural context, most modern scholars have largely followed the major preoccupation of our elite literary sources, exploring the challenges posed to biblical wisdom and Jewish piety by Greek *paideia*. There is no doubt, of course, that Hellenism remained a potent force in Judaism and Christianity long after Alexander, the Ptolemies, and the Seleucids.²⁸ By the time of the Roman destruction of the Second Temple, there were already ample strategies for elevating Moses over Homer or Plato—many of which would be repeated for centuries thereafter.²⁹ Likewise, the specialist trained in Jewish Studies is hardly at a loss to find accessible studies of Hellenism. Much of the field of Late Antiquity, in fact, has been dedicated to tracing the reception and transformation of a “classical world” imagined foremost in Greek terms. Studies of the self-presentation of Jews and Christians in relation to Greek culture, language, and knowledge are similarly widespread.³⁰ By contrast, questions of Romanness and Romanization prove more difficult to engage, particularly for those scholars of Jewish or Christian literature less accustomed to navigating material and documentary data.³¹

What we would like to suggest here is that much might be gained by attending to the nuanced sense of Romanness now emerging among those Classicists and ancient historians who have set aside the traditional focus on wars, resisted the reduction of the effects of colonization to the act of conquest, and grappled anew with the more mundane workings of the Roman Empire in provincial settings.³² Pushing past the conflict-of-cultures model, for instance, Greg Woolf has approached Romanization as a set of dynamic local processes, thus attempting to chart the adjustments made—asymmetrically but nevertheless reciprocally—by Rome and provincials. While “it is not to be denied that Roman imperial culture was created in the context of the extension of the domination of one state over its neighbours,” Woolf stresses, “the hegemonic relations created in that process were not equivalent to the subjugation of the culture of one ethnic group or national community to that of another.”³³ The

conventional dichotomy of “Romans” and “natives” thus oversimplifies the process of “the emergence of a new, highly differentiated social formation incorporating a new cultural logic and a new configuration of power,” whereby “all participants acquired new places in the imperial system of differences because that system itself had been transformed.”³⁴

As the field of Classics gradually ingests the implausibility of a clean linear imposition of a civilizing Rome on the provinces, it is increasingly making room for the colonized in telling this story of Romanization. With recent interest in Roman provincials, there has also come fresh attention to the potential for Jewish evidence to be used as Roman evidence. Notable, for instance, are David J. Mattingly’s comments on the issue in his 2011 monograph *Imperialism, Power, and Identity: Experience in the Roman Empire*: “[T]he problem is that we have little extant writing from the Roman world that explicitly explored the feelings of provincials about the process of incorporation into the empire. There is one prime exception to this general rule—the Jews.”³⁵ It is perhaps symptomatic of the state of the discussion that Jews make no further appearance in Mattingly’s monograph, even as he questions the rationale for their conventional omission: “While there is substantial ancient and modern literature on their relations with the empire, there is also perhaps a tendency to overstress the atypicality of the Jews. They are seen as something special in the empire, and their voices thus are used to give life to ancient Judaism rather than to form a basis for understanding the experience of other provincials under Roman rule.”³⁶

Of course, almost twenty years ago, Fergus Millar articulated the significance of Jewish data for understanding the Roman Near East.³⁷ Millar’s calls extended the earlier insights of Arnaldo Momigliano and were picked up and extended by historians working across the lines of Classics and Jewish Studies, such as Shaye Cohen, Hannah Cotton, Martin Goodman, Erich Gruen, Tessa Rajak, and Seth Schwartz. Yet, even as individuals have played important roles as interdisciplinary diplomats and dual citizens, much remains to be done to put the fields—as fields—into sustained conversation. Whether the Jews were any more or less typical as Roman provincials than the Gauls, for instance, remains largely unaddressed. In the majority of the field of Classics, interest or knowledge in Hebrew remains as rare as interest or knowledge in Latin among scholars of ancient Judaism.

In perhaps the most notable recent trend in the study of rabbinic literature, however, a growing number of scholars are rethinking themselves also as students of local populations and provincial sub-elites—whether of imperial

Rome or Persia.³⁸ This reorientation is promising, in our view, not only for opening new avenues for conversation across disciplines but also for framing new questions within them. How did Palestinian rabbis, for instance, figure themselves in a multifaceted and shifting imperial landscape? Did a history of Hellenistic rule and the culture of Hellenism shade their ideas of *romantitas*? Did Greek attempts to assert cultural continuity and ethnic identity in a Roman world have any impact on Jewish attempts to do the same?³⁹ To what degree did Christians appropriate or reconfigure these cultural poetics and strategies of power, drawing upon Jewishness, Greekness, and Romanness?⁴⁰

Provincializing Christendom

At first sight, it might seem strange to take up these questions with a focus on the third to seventh centuries CE. The modern scholarly discussion of Jews and the Roman Empire has focused on the revolts of the late first and early second centuries CE. Research on Judaism in the following centuries has tended to focus on rabbis, considered largely in isolation from Romans and Christians, while research on the Roman Empire typically turns toward questions of Christianization, looking westward and leaving the Greek East to scholars of Byzantium. By contrast, the studies in this volume address figures, texts, and events at a remove from the cataclysm of 70 CE, on either side of the conventional dividing line of Constantine's "conversion," and in both eastern and western halves of the empire. The time period covered by the volume, thus, is roughly what is familiar to scholars of Jewish Studies as the "talmudic period," though here examined with a sustained focus on the Roman Empire rather than with a trajectory toward Babylonia. Our scope also overlaps with the various sets of centuries that historians and art historians call "Late Antiquity," albeit with a focus on Jews rather than on Romans and "barbarians" or Christians and "pagans."⁴¹ By virtue of this scope, we treat Jews as no less "late antique" than Christians, and Byzantium as no less "Roman" than the Latin West.⁴²

The shape of this volume reflects its genesis in a conversation centered in Jewish Studies and engaging other disciplines from this perspective. It also builds on important precedents set by earlier collaborative projects—most notably, the three-volume exploration *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture*, edited by Peter Schäfer with Catherine Hezser, published in 1998, 2000, and 2002.⁴³ We follow Schäfer in eschewing questions of influence

and approaching “[r]abbinic Judaism in its literary output . . . [as] part of the general ‘discursive space’ of the Hellenic culture of Palestine in late antiquity, not the antipode of a Hellenism to which it considered itself ‘exposed,’ which it would ‘absorb’ to a certain extent or perhaps ‘repel,’ but an integral component of a dense cultural network of relationships.”⁴⁴ Yet, whereas Schäfer’s volumes focus mainly on the rabbinic evidence,⁴⁵ we here—fifteen years later—encompass a broader range of Jewish data as well as more Christian material, both pre- and post-Constantinian, and from both eastern and western halves of the Roman Empire.

Despite the inclusion of Christian alongside Jewish evidence, we must stress that this volume is not oriented toward exploring the relationships between Christianity and Judaism, or even between Christians and Jews. Rather, it reflects an overarching attempt to rethink the place of Romanness and empire in the social environment of ancient Jews and in their literary and material cultures. It is our contention that the study of rabbis and other ancient Jews might benefit from attention to similar or parallel tensions as have been explored in research on Christianity and the Roman Empire. Indeed, many of the insights from the field of Classics noted above have already been put to work, to brilliant effect, in recent studies of early and late antique Christianity—from Laura Nasrallah’s application of insights from the study of the Second Sophistic to Justin and Tatian, to Jeremy Schott’s rereading of Eusebius.⁴⁶ Furthermore, just as some Christian sources may tell us something, directly or by analogy, about the experience of Jews under Roman rule, so others might shed light on the experiences of Romans ruling over Jews. Reread from the perspective of a focus on Jews and Judaism, the church’s ambivalence toward Rome may reveal interesting facets of Romanness. It may also point to some elements of Christianization that extend, or capitalize upon, earlier trends or situations of Romanization.⁴⁷ In turn, a sense of the continuities, pre- and post-Constantine, may help us to understand the late antique Jewish evidence—so much of which crosses this line with surprisingly little to signal the sea change that Christian sources so vociferously proclaim.⁴⁸

Two decades ago, Averil Cameron stressed the dangers of taking the rhetoric of late antique Christian sources as simply reflective of the reality of Christianization in Late Antiquity: “[M]odern criticism still largely polarizes the issue by starting from the assumption of a great divide between Christian and pagan; this has had the effect of obscuring the real issues by implying that everything in the fourth-century literature is to be explained in terms of ‘conflict.’ By contrast, as anthropologists and indeed theologians have realized

in recent years, translation from one cultural system into another is not a straightforward process. . . . In our case, the still common, and only partly acknowledged, triumphalistic perspective has often led to the use of such inappropriate terms as ‘victory’ in reference to Christianity.”⁴⁹

Reflecting on the entrenched narratives that have shaped research on Late Antiquity, Clifford Ando has extended Cameron’s insights. “To identify conversion to Christianity as a feature of Late Antiquity, or name it a cause of the empire’s decline,” he stresses, “is subtly to remove Christianity from the classical world altogether.”⁵⁰ The distorting effects of this division are evident in older studies that figure the postclassical age as an age of decline, but—Ando suggests—they have also shaped more recent narratives that emphasize elements of “newness” to refigure Late Antiquity as an age of transformation. In both cases, modern scholarly reading practices may have internalized a distinction that says more about religious rhetoric than about social reality: “Christian intellectuals across a wide spectrum constructed the relationship between Christian and pagan—and between church and state—as one of latent hostility, punctuated by persecutions and periods of conflict, not so much because that is what their data revealed, but *inter alia* because of the power and authority that had accrued to martyrdom and resistance in the development of Christian identity across the second and third centuries. In other words, [modern] historians who view the history of the church through the lens of persecution and violence do so in part because that is what they were intended to see.”⁵¹

If “pagan”/Christian conflict is what late antique Christian authors intend us to see, what is thereby rendered invisible? Significantly, to tell the tale of Late Antiquity as the struggle between “Christianity” and “paganism” is also to follow Justin, Eusebius, and their heirs in dismissing Jews and Judaism as irrelevant to world history after 70 and 135—as Israel superseded and replaced, both in its perennial battle against shifting empires and in its promise eventually to triumph as a “light to the nations.” To take seriously the rhetorical character of elite Christian claims about Christianization, thus, is to raise the possibility that Jews, Judaism, and Jewish evidence may have more of a place in the study of the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity than typically allowed.⁵²

As noted above, a wealth of scholarship has been dedicated to exploring the causes and effects of Jewish rebellions against Rome and to considering the ramifications for Roman history and the twin origins of Christianity and rabbinic Judaism. But in research on Late Antiquity, Jews have been largely ignored. As in the case of the engagement with Hebrew and other Jewish literature in the field of Classics, individual scholars have brought materials

from and about Jews to bear on the study of Late Antiquity to brilliant effect; the present volume takes inspiration, in this regard, from such polymaths as Daniel Boyarin, Paula Fredriksen, Oded Irshai, and Hagith Sivan. Yet it also takes its impetus in the need to facilitate further engagement on the levels of fields and disciplines, where the task of reading the Jews into the broader history of Late Antiquity still remains largely undone.

As with the conflation of empires and the privileging of Hellenistic/Jewish difference noted above, there are notable premodern precedents for the erasure of Jews in the historiography of the late Roman Empire. Issues of language and genre have always complicated the inclusion of Jewish evidence, and some readers of rabbinic sources have been complicit in stressing Jewish isolationism in ways that segregate the study of rabbinic Judaism from the study of Late Antiquity. Perhaps above all, the absence of Jewish evidence mirrors the dominant structures of ecclesiastical history, which have provided the framework and categories for the modern study of the premodern West. At least since Walter Bauer, specialists in Christianity have drawn attention to the distorting effects of the dependence on Eusebius, in particular, for the study of the doctrinal and geographical diversity of Christianity.⁵³ But the implications for the study of late antique Judaism have not been pressed in this fashion. “Scholars cling to his tendentious account of early Christianity since they have little else on which to rely,” Elizabeth Clark remarks, and scholars of Jewish Studies, too, may do well to heed her call to “use Eusebius to better effect by asking how his account shores up claims for the dominance of the proto-orthodox church, enhances its leaders’ prestige, and justifies particular institutions and teachings.”⁵⁴

This line of research on Late Antiquity further draws our attention to the effects of the analytical privileging of conflict in research on the Roman Empire.⁵⁵ In Jewish Studies, of course, the privileging of conflict has been deep and long-standing, shaping the structure and boundaries of the disciplines of its specialist study—and perhaps especially its separation from other fields. Among the implications for the study of Judaism has been the treatment of the wars of the first and second centuries as pivots for the rest of Jewish history and an emphasis on passivity, isolation, and persecution thereafter. Nineteenth-century proponents of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* told the story of the Jews after 70 and 135 as *Leidens- und Gelehrten-geschichte*.⁵⁶ In the twentieth century, this approach was interrogated, but it has had long-standing structural effects nonetheless, particularly on the disciplinary settings in which Judaism is—and is not—studied. Even when post–World War II scholarship

sought to revive the agency of post-Christian Jews, it was primarily with recourse to various types of “conflict theory.”⁵⁷ Today, it is often taken as axiomatic that identity is a construct created through clashes and competition and that polemical writings can be used to posit the “reactions” even in sources that are not explicitly polemical.⁵⁸ Likewise, in post-9/11 discussions, it is not unusual to find the Huntingtonian “clash of civilizations” evoked to describe the experience of ancient Jewish subjects of Rome.⁵⁹

One certainly would not wish to downplay the depth or effects of the various conflicts with Christians and Romans on Jews in the period under discussion, nor to conjure some peaceful image of coexistence akin to modern liberal ideals of multiculturalism or religious pluralism.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, we might wonder about what voices, data, or perspectives are left out when we treat moments of conflict as typical, assuming that the ancient Jewish, Christian, and Roman experience was otherwise characterized by mutual isolation. If we imagine that all identity is a question of agon, every text and event is reduced to a single scale, as if the aggadic bagatelle and the most gruesome martyrology can be charted as stronger or weaker assertions of the same impulse to will self over other. The processes of the non-exceptional quotidian under Rome, however, may require measuring by a different cultural barometer.

Some elements of ancient experience may be conveyed by the spatial analogy of ancient cultures and religions to modern nation-states—with boundaries to be defended and invaded, civilizations to defend, wars to wage—but much is also skewed and obscured. To describe Christianization in spatial terms, as if the accretion of conquered territories, is to misread the poetics of elite Christian sources as mirroring the power at play in local landscapes.⁶¹ To treat “Judaism,” “Christianity,” and “Rome” as discrete entities clashing with one another is to imply that these terms encompass categories of the same sort, assuming a degree of commensurability that makes little sense from what we know of “religion” and empire in the ancient Mediterranean and Near East.⁶² To treat all interaction as struggle or “culture war,” moreover, is to blunt the brutal and shocking force of those moments of religious violence that shook the cycles of local life, particularly during the process of Christianization.⁶³

If the privileging of conflict has shaped the structures of the specialist study of Judaism, Christianity, and the Roman Empire in parallel but isolated subfields, the questioning of these tendencies may further foster interdisciplinary exchange. Such exchange proves all the more promising, in our view, in light of important shifts in the study of Christianization, whereby older narratives about dramatic change are being gradually displaced by more stochastic

models of mutation.⁶⁴ Worth quoting, in this regard, is Peter Brown's reassessment of his famous 1971 study of the holy man in Late Antiquity:

[T]he oracles did not fall silent, in late antiquity, with the rise of a distinctive new "style" of relations to the supernatural associated with the Christian holy man. On such an issue, the spiritual landscape of the Mediterranean was more old-fashioned, less "style conscious" than I had thought was the case in 1971. The holy man . . . has lost much of his instant, diagnostic glamour. *He was no harbinger of a new religious order, implicitly consonant with a new style of social relations.* What little "style" he imparted to those around him was more like that of a trusted neighborhood sewing woman, letting in a little here, letting out a little there, in well-worn, serviceable clothes, inherited from a distant past.⁶⁵

The present volume seeks to illumine some scenes from this world in slow shift, with a special concern for Jewish and other materials marginalized in grand narratives about the Roman Empire. Rather than focusing upon battles, persecutions, or pivotal moments, the volume tackles the challenge of identifying imperial power at play in less dramatic circumstances—looking to the ways that local identities were articulated and defended, to the ambitious maneuverings of provincial sub-elites, to the authority claims tacit in choices of genre, to telling gaps and silences, and to the selective acts of remembering and reinterpreting the past in story, song, and image. Peering behind the ancient and modern rhetoric of "cultural wars," the contributors draw out some of the threads that bound center to periphery, majority to minority, and imperialism to locality in Late Antiquity. In the process, they lead us through the variegated terrain of different types and genres of evidence. We are accustomed to hearing the voices of moralizing Roman elites who grumble at Jewish misanthropy, church fathers who demonize "the Jews," and solipsistic sages who seemingly answer accusations with piercing silence or smug isolationism. In what follows, however, such familiar voices are set in counterpoint and polyphony to voices from other sources as well—ranging from documentary papyri to Christian biography, and encompassing iconographical, liturgical, legal, exegetical, and historical traditions as well.

Chapter Summaries

The essays in Part I, “Rabbis and Other Roman Sub-Elites,” focus on the second and third centuries. In “The Afterlives of the Torah’s Ethnic Language: The Sifra and Clement on Leviticus 18.1–5,” Beth Berkowitz analyzes the interpretations of Lev 18.1–5 in Sifra and Clement of Alexandria’s *Strōmateis*, treating the two as counterexamples to the regnant story lines of third-century Judaism and Christianity. In these seemingly far-flung works, ethnic particularity and universality serve as centers of dynamically overlapping discourses, mirroring something of the totalizing imperial claims and the local counterclaims that together constitute Romanization.

In “The Kingdom of Edessa and the Creation of a Christian Aristocracy,” William Adler takes up Edessa as an “ideal test case for the study of the stages in the Hellenization, Romanization, and Christianization of the Near East.” In the first part of the essay, he considers the place of Julius Africanus and Bardaisan in the cosmopolitan court culture of early third-century Edessa, just prior to Abgar the Great’s failed attempts at Romanizing the customs of the Syrian city. In the second part, he considers the fates of the two Christian sophists after Edessa’s fall to Rome. Much about these two Christians, he suggests, makes more sense in comparison with “pagans” like Lucian and Longinus, than in the context of the martyrs, apologists, and polemicists who have had a disproportionate place in scholarly characterizations of Christianity.

Natalie Dohrmann’s “Law and Imperial Idioms: Rabbinic Legalism in a Roman World” approaches the rabbinic legal project in toto, reading the Mishnah and other rabbinic documents as Roman as much as Jewish. Her analysis thus unsettles the standard cultural genealogies of the earliest rabbinic movement. In the tannaitic embrace of halakhah as the defining concern, discourse, and genre of rabbinic authority and religiosity, she observes a relatively radical rupture from the forms of religious and literary expression common in Second Temple Judaism. This very rupture, however, draws attention to the marked continuity with Roman legal culture and administration, as well as with the imperial pageant of just rule.

Hayim Lapin’s “The Law of Moses and the Jews: Rabbis, Ethnic Marking, and Romanization” analyzes Mishnah *Ketubot* 7.6 and its parallels in the Tosefta and Talmud Yerushalmi to illustrate how “rabbis’ history of self-fashioning offers a specific point of entry into the contested question of provincial Romanization.” The texts delimit the boundaries of acceptable

comportment, especially of women, as defined by an emergent rabbinic elite. But they also defy the modern scholar who wishes to reduce the motives of Jewish subjects of Rome to a binary of acculturation or resistance. “Debates about public bathing and the very norms of female and wifely comportment,” Lapin shows, “are as significant for locating rabbis within the culture of the empire as for marking rabbinic rejection of that culture.”

Part II focuses on the fourth to sixth centuries, exploring “Christianization and Other Modalities of Romanization.” Rabbinic evidence from the period is first taken up by Joshua Levinson’s “There Is No Place Like Home: Rabbinic Responses to the Christianization of Palestine.” Noting evidence for a protracted Christianization of the Holy Land that began as early as the fourth century, Levinson wonders how Palestinian rabbis absorbed and responded to this stark new reality. Reading the midrashic *scriptio inferior*, he discovers a range of strategies to mimic, counter, and undermine Christian infiltration of Jewish space. The rabbi finds a different topography upon which to focus his gaze—Torah: “The tragic gap between the signifier (text) and the signified (reality) brings him to use the text from the past to transport his audience to the utopian future, as textual travel enables the sage to visit ‘the places of his desire.’”

In “Between Gaza and Minorca: The (Un)Making of Minorities in Late Antiquity,” Hagith Sivan brings us into the worlds of two fifth-century bishops: Bishop Porphyry seeks to remake a “pagan” Gaza in the image of a Christian Jerusalem, while Bishop Severus seeks to erase the powerful Jewish population from the island of Minorca. In the process, Sivan reveals the place of women and Jews in marking the difference between Roman past and Christian present in Christian discourse. If the situations in which these bishops find themselves speak to the enduring heterogeneity of the Roman Empire, they also signal the irreducibly local processes by which it was made Christian, often through the violent imposition of a Christian rhetoric of religious difference upon complex religious landscapes.

Oded Irshai’s “Christian Historiographers’ Reflections on Jewish-Christian Violence in Fifth-Century Alexandria” tackles the problem of religious violence by demonstrating how attention to Jews destabilizes late antique Christian as well as modern scholarly narratives. Jews show up throughout Socrates Scholasticus of Constantinople’s *Historia Ecclesiastica* (ca. 439 CE). The story that he analyzes centers on an unlikely scene: a group of Jews in Alexandria who in 414–415 felt empowered to viciously attack a group of priggish Christians who came to curtail the customary entertainments of the city. Looking

to proximate urban outbreaks in North Africa and recent legal developments, Irshai shows how the bishop Cyril assumed a jurisdictional authority based not on right but on the spirit of a recent law that managed to erase the special status of Jews vis-à-vis pagans, even as it undermined traditional protections. In other words, the violence between Jews and Christians in Alexandria was very much about Cyril's assertion of imperial authority over and against a rival *Christian* leader.

Ophir Münz-Manor's "Narrating Salvation: Verbal Sacrifices in Late Antique Liturgical Poetry" compares the fourth-century Jewish liturgical poems for the Day of Atonement with a Christian Eucharistic prayer preserved in the *Apostolic Constitutions*. He pulls liturgical texts into the vibrant marketplace of late antique religiosity and shows how the deep structures of sacrifice in the fourth and fifth centuries also reveal a surprising reality of shared ideology and poetics. From this shared world, Münz-Manor reconstructs the ritual theory that animates his data, allowing us to see the threads of connection between the Palestinian poet, the Antiochene liturgist, the thinking of church father John Chrysostom (ca. 347–407), and even the Greek polytheist *historiola*.

Ra'anan Boustán's "Israelite Kingship, Christian Rome, and the Jewish Imperial Imagination: Midrashic Precursors to the Medieval 'Throne of Solomon'" recovers the accreted history of the *ekphrasis* of King Solomon's throne, setting the relevant Jewish traditions at a crossroads in the development of one bit of Byzantine imperial ideology. Even while tracing Solomonian and related images in wide circulation across vast imperial, linguistic, and cultural realms, Boustán demonstrates that "the image of the throne indexes the wider Jewish response to the rise of Christianized notions of kingship." Boustán shows how Jewish aggadic treatments of kingship evolved and began to merge with, as well as reinforce, the broader non-Jewish imaginary of the emperor. In Jewish sources, ideas about the throne of Solomon morphed from the discourse of cautionary anti-imperialism in early midrashic tradition to celebrations of a trans-imperial, divinely authorized ruler of the world.

Part III, "Continuity and Rupture," features four studies that cover the entire period under discussion from the perspective of different types of data. In "Chains of Tradition from *Avot* to the '*Avodah Piyutim*,'" Michael Swartz examines the discourses of continuity in midrashic, liturgical, and other materials. He begins by considering Mishnah *Avot*, the locus classicus for the "validation of rabbinic authority" in relation to the biblical and Second Temple Jewish past. Whereas the chains of tradition in *Avot* are conventionally cited as representing *the* Jewish approach to constructing continuity after 70 CE,

Swartz reminds us of alternative versions in magical, medicinal, and liturgical Jewish literature from Late Antiquity. His focus falls on the *‘Avodah piyutim*—third- to seventh-century liturgical poems linked to the Day of Atonement, which retell the history of Israel to celebrate the centrality of the priesthood. He shows how these two sources present competing positions, even as each can be situated within a broader Roman context shaped by Hellenistic and Christian claims to continuity as well.

Hannah Cotton’s “Change and Continuity in Late Legal Papyri from Palæstina Tertia: *Nomos Hellēnikos* and *Ethos Rōmaikon*” uses four Jewish marriage documents—*P.Yadin* 18 and 65 and *P.Nessana* 18 and 20—to illumine local legal practice in the Roman Near East from the second to sixth centuries. What she argues is that these documents, “albeit written by and for Jews, can be legitimately used, not least for lack of other evidence, to trace continuity and change in legal practice and formulas in this part of the Roman world.” The documentary evidence cautions against assuming that the rabbinic marriage contract was normative among all Jews, even as it illustrates the value of Jewish evidence for understanding provincial negotiations and expressions of Romanness.

With Rina Talgam’s “The Representation of the Temple and Jerusalem in Jewish and Christian Houses of Prayer in the Holy Land in Late Antiquity,” we turn to focus on the built spaces of Jewish and Christian worship, ranging from the earliest known synagogues to churches created in the wake of Muslim conquest. Showcasing iconographical examples of the persisting power of sacrificial imagery for centuries after the destruction of the Second Temple, she uncovers the palimpsest of Tabernacle, Temple, and Jerusalem present and past, which shaped the lived experience and built environment of the Roman Near East across creedal lines. Comparison between Jewish and Christian interpretative and building practices, in turn, makes clear how “similar artistic vocabulary could be used to express opposing perceptions and positions.”

The final essay in the volume follows the same sweep of centuries westward. With “Roman Christianity and the Post-Roman West: The Social Correlates of the *Contra Iudaeos* Tradition,” Paula Fredriksen takes us on a tour across the full period of Late Antiquity into the making of the Middle Ages, as seen through the lens of Christian literature and legislation on Jews and Judaism. Tracing shifting balances of poetics and power, she uses a focus on Christian language about Jews to illumine Christian politics and positioning in multiple Roman and post-Roman contexts—ranging from second-century Rome to fourth-century North Africa to seventh-century Spain. Moving

beyond the question of whether rhetoric reflects reality, she asks when and how Christian rhetoric shaped social reality for Jews.

Conclusion

At the outset, we noted how the preoccupations of ancient Jewish and Christian literature have guided some of the operating assumptions, governing questions, and judgments of selectivity and typicality in the modern discussion of Judaism, Christianity, and the Roman Empire. Echoing the rhetoric of apocalypses like Revelation, scholars have often described Judaism and Christianity as if they were self-contained and sovereign entities clashing with a commensurate “pagan” imperial culture. Along with Josephus and Justin, scholars have treated the first Jewish Revolt against Rome as a nexus for debating the uniqueness of the Jews; and with the rabbis, they have approached the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE as an event with the power to periodize. With the *contra Iudaeos* tradition, they have treated polemics as the central engine of both Christian and Jewish identity formation. Furthermore, following the lead of Luke-Acts and Eusebius, they have framed the Roman Empire as the natural setting and center for the story of the spread of Christianity, while writing post-70 Jews and Judaism out of a history imagined to have its center in Rome, its teleology in Christianization, and its trajectory westward.

What might it mean, then, to read the Jews back into the broader history of Late Antiquity? By means of conclusion, we would like to suggest that such a process may be less a matter of inclusion than of reorientation. In the thoughtful epilogue to his collected essays, Millar reflects upon the westward focus and trajectory of “ancient history” as traditionally practiced, from within a framework set by Greek and Latin literary materials preserved in medieval manuscripts. It remains remarkable, Millar notes, “how firm an intellectual boundary has been erected against the incorporation . . . firstly, of the vast mass of primary material preserved on papyrus or in inscriptions, and secondly, of Jewish and Christian texts.”⁶⁶ He speculates about the possibility of another approach, which encompasses a broader linguistic, geographical, and evidentiary scope:

There could be a perfectly valid framework (and educational syllabus) of “ancient history” which took as its central focus the Levant or the eastern Mediterranean of (say) the first millennium BC and

the first millennium AD, up to the Islamic conquests, and from that perspective would incorporate the emergence of Greek literature, the rise of the Greek city-state, and the spread of Greek colonisation on the one hand, and late Pharaonic Egypt on the other, as well as Phoenicia, the Aramean kingdoms, Israel and Judah, and the Neo-Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires. These empires would be essential to the story, and so—and in the same way—would Alexander's conquests, the Hellenistic kingdoms, and the Roman Empire.⁶⁷

With Millar's thought experiment of reshaping the disciplinary landscape of scholarship to resist the hegemony of Hellenism and its artificial isolation from the "Semitic" Near East, we might pair Brown's reflections on rethinking the rise of Western Christendom in light of Europe's place as "only the westernmost variant of a far wider Christian world, whose center of gravity lay, rather in the eastern Mediterranean and in the Middle East."⁶⁸ Brown thus folds Byzantium back into what constitutes the "Roman," albeit from the other direction—reversing the modern Eurocentric perspective on the place of the Latin West in the world of Late Antiquity and pushing us to take seriously the non-European lineage, languages, and locales that shaped the Middle Ages. Brown invites us to view the Christianization of the Roman Empire and Europe from the perspective of a wider world, which stretched much farther eastward in its interconnectivity than suggested by the traditional Eusebian model of ecclesiastical history.

For rethinking the place of Jews in the historiography of the Roman Empire, it is perhaps useful to ponder both these visions. Millar's thought experiment relativizes the Greek gaze of Herodotus and Thucydides and their modern heirs by challenging us to follow the material and documentary data where they take us—along roads that cut across and stretch beyond the worlds conjured by those elite literary sources in Greek and Latin that were embraced by Renaissance thinkers as exemplifying the genius of Western culture. As the contributions to the present volume emphasize, many of the other surviving sources for antiquity happen to be Jewish. In Brown's case, he chronicles the emergence of distinctively European forms of Christianity but chooses to start his story in Edessa with Bardaisan. In asserting that "Christianity was far from being a 'Western' religion" in Late Antiquity,⁶⁹ Brown reminds us that the world of late antique Christians was not bounded by the Roman Empire or limited to a single western trajectory. Seen from this perspective, in fact, it

looks more like the world of late antique Jews in its scope and interconnectivity, straddling the boundaries of Rome and Persia. Brown's expansive vision, like that of Millar, thus opens up the possibility of reading Jews back into the broader history of Late Antiquity not by inserting Jewish evidence into familiar non-Jewish frameworks but rather by reorienting our analyses along lines that cross and interlace what traditional disciplines divide.⁷⁰

It is our hope that the present volume points to some of the promise of such integrative approaches. Taken together, the essays in this volume offer case studies in the modalities and limits of Romanization in its various registers. They speak, moreover, to some of the insights to be gained from experiments with reorientation, recontextualization, and perspectival shifts—in this case, by rereading Jewish sources as Roman sources, by remapping Jewish and Christian peripheries as part of a constellation of Roman centers, and by “reversing the gaze” to reconsider Roman and Christian evidence from the vantage point of questions and categories in Jewish Studies.

PART I

Rabbis and Other
Roman Sub-Elites

THE ESSAYS IN Part I invite us to glimpse the experiences of ambitious sub-elites operating on the margins of Roman power in the high empire (especially second to fourth centuries). Whereas recent research on the Second Sophistic has taken the experience of the Greek exile as exemplary, we highlight rabbinic examples, rereading both Roman dynamics and Christian experiences in relation to them. In the process, the essays in Part I demonstrate how attention to specific settings and stories can disrupt regnant historiographies—in this case, by recovering the place of individual ambition and localized collective bricolage in the often paradoxical reciprocities of Romanization.

Beth Berkowitz interrogates the familiar trope of the “universalizing” post-racial Christian and the “particularizing” ethnic Jew, in interaction with recent research on Christian ethnic reasoning and rabbinic universalism. Berkowitz begins by tracing the exegesis of an ethnically charged pentateuchal passage through first- through third-century Jewish and Christian readers. “What imperialist ambitions are encoded in the text’s universalism,” she asks, “and what fluidity of identity is permitted by the text’s particularism?” What she uncovers is a surprisingly complex lexicon of communal inclusion. Her analysis of the interpretations of Lev 18.1–5 in the *Sifra*, a tannaitic midrash on Leviticus, and in Clement of Alexandria’s *Strōmateis* provides counterexamples to the regnant story lines of third-century Judaism and Christianity. If Clement and the sages self-consciously inhabit the biblical past in ways that seem to mark them as distinct from other Romans, it is telling that their stance thus recalls that of the neo-Athenians of the Second Sophistic. Here, too, the traditionalism manifested in the construction of self through an idealized past and thematized exile is, in part, an innovation of a Roman present.

William Adler similarly emphasizes the instability of ethnic identification in the Roman Near East, cautioning that “depending on the point you wanted to make, the same person might be variously called a Syrian, an Assyrian, a Parthian, or a Babylonian.” Likewise, his analysis of Julius Africanus and Bardaisan reveals how “the binary categories of ‘pagan’ and ‘Christian’ can sometimes obscure more than they illuminate.” The case of Africanus, in particular, illustrates how Christian evidence can be read as both Roman and Greek: his reinvention after the fall of Edessa and his public career in Rome illustrate “in microcosm a process taking place on a larger scale throughout the eastern

Mediterranean in the second and early third centuries CE: the Romanization of the Greek-speaking educated elites of the East.”

For the purposes of this volume, the case of Edessa proves particularly important inasmuch as it offers us a specific point against which to plot the typicality and exceptionalism of Palestinian Jews as a provincial population in the Roman Near East. Claims of Jewish atypicality have tended to sideline Jews from the flow of Roman history. But some of what Adler states of Edessa might similarly be said of Palestine: “Up until the time of its Roman colonization, [it] was adept in assimilating cultural and religious influences that elsewhere sometimes erupted into conflict.” Like Palestine, Edessa had a proud history and lineage of native rule between rival empires, which lived on a distinctive provincial culture embodied by the cultivation of a Semitic linguistic heritage (that is, Syriac), by a class of experts that flourished, particularly under Roman rule.

The next two essays turn to the most prominent Jewish example of such a class of experts: the rabbis. Natalie Dohrmann points to a new avenue and strategy for further exploration of the Romanness of late antique rabbis. Whereas Rome has so far eluded scholarly analysis as a cultural influence on the forms and genres of rabbinic tradition, Dohrmann’s analysis emphasizes the link between rabbinic law and observable Roman cultural logics, as mediated in the contact zone of Roman law and legalism. She argues that late antique rabbis molded Roman legalism and political tropes into an enduring Jewish theological discourse. At the same time, her approach highlights the importance of legal sources throughout the period under discussion in the volume—a theme picked up by Cotton and Fredriksen in Part III of this volume.

That even rabbinic insularity is striated with Romanness is further demonstrated by Hayim Lapin, who reads Mishnah *Ketubot* 7.6 and its parallels in the Tosefta and Talmud Yerushalmi as evidence for “a local, provincial discourse.” If we wish to distinguish what is “Jewish” from what is “Roman” here, we are faced with a quandary: “The social practices . . . at issue in ethnic marking are not in themselves ethnically distinctive”; what rabbis say of mixed bathing, for instance, would not be out of place in the writings of Pliny the Elder, Quintilian, or Clement of Alexandria.

Precisely because of this paradox, Lapin proposes, attention to how the local and Roman convention was rewritten as rabbinic norm might help us get at the question of power, namely, how the rabbis came to define or police borders. Early rabbinic halakhah folds into itself a combination of Roman social conventions with legal notarial customs not governed by the rabbinic

movement; it is from such threads that Palestinian sages seem to have woven the “Jewish” norm of domestic conduct, so as to position themselves as its guardians. Read from this perspective, rabbinic traditions about women and comportment attest “the making of rabbis as a coherent ideological group” and, in the process, speak to the value of ancient Jewish evidence for addressing an overlooked element of imperialism more broadly: “the formation and development of new, traditionalizing, indigenous, sometimes politically resistant (but more often not) social groups that can attempt to exercise power or influence locally.”

Taken together, the essays in Part I draw attention to ambitious sub-elites in a roiling provincial scene; there was room to advance, and idioms of power served as tokens, proofs, and assertions of cultural capital. Rabbis here are not defined by traumatic political reversals, and inasmuch as even opposition must be articulated in the idioms of the powerful, Roman imperialism remains implicated. We are reminded that the politically and polemically quieter Jewish and Christian writings are also part of the imperial history of Rome, the provincial histories of Romanization, and the Roman histories of Christianity and Judaism. Clement and the sages of the Sifra are not merely exegetes engaging Scripture in isolation from imperial realities. Africanus is no less Christian for being a “philosopher for hire” rather than a warrior for the cross. Nor are the Mishnah, Tosefta, and Yerushalmi the pure creations of an exceptional pietistic fringe. Each, rather, can be read as an example of the complex processes of Romanization at play, perhaps particularly in the agency, ambitions, and aspirations of provincial sub-elites.

CHAPTER I

The Afterlives of the Torah's Ethnic Language: The Sifra and Clement on Leviticus 18.1–5

BETH A. BERKOWITZ

The contrast between Christian universalism and Jewish particularism, long the bedrock of popular perception and scholarly assessment, has been satisfyingly complicated by recent work on late antique foundations. Scholars of early Christianity have pointed to the significance of ethnic categories for the construction of early Christian identities.¹ While much early Christian rhetoric does indeed claim a universalizing transcendence of conventional categories of difference, Denise Buell and others have observed that the universalist strain is accompanied by an ethnicizing one and that Christian universalist language frequently relies on notions of ethnicity even when revising them. Since Christians could not easily claim the cultural capital that comes with origins in hoary antiquity, appeals to established notions of peoplehood may have been particularly important for acquiring authenticity. On the Jewish side, the work of Marc Hirshman, Terence Donaldson, and others on a variety of Jewish sources has highlighted a universalist strain among Jews of Late Antiquity.² Far from restricting revelation and election to ethnic Israel, a host of ancient Jewish voices appears to allow for or even to encourage gentile participation in the scholarly activities, communities, or obligations and aspirations defined by Torah. All this work, coming from both directions, rewrites existing narratives about Judaism and Christianity and their differences, and rethinks the discourses of group identity devised by ancient authors. The picture once

held—of rabbis withdrawing into themselves, as Christians reached out to the diverse peoples of the Roman Empire to convert and ultimately to control them—is forever changed. No longer can we apply universalism to one group and particularism to the other as we characterize their respective orientations to the cultural constellation of the Roman world.

This essay wishes to draw out the implications of these arguments for the project of understanding the “Bible as it was,” as James Kugel calls it.³ Recent work on Christian ethnic language on one side and rabbinic universalism on the other provides us with a fresh approach for charting the interpretive path of Scripture among Christian and Jewish readers in Late Antiquity. This work invites us to reexamine passages from Scripture in which universalism or particularism operates and to explore the commonalities and divergences between rabbinic and Christian exegetical engagement with them. We might ask, for example: When do Christian interpreters embrace or extend the Torah’s more particularist or exclusivist formulations? When do Jewish interpreters subvert them? I will pose these questions to two more or less contemporary exegeses of Lev 18.1–5 from the second and third centuries: one by Clement of Alexandria; and one within the tannaitic rabbinic compilation of exegeses of Leviticus, the Sifra. Lev 18.1–5 prohibits Israel from imitating the practices of its neighbors and, as such, is a striking instance of the Hebrew Bible’s ethnic separatism. I will show that Clement’s comments in his *Strōmateis* activate the ethnic separatism of the Leviticus passage, while the Sifra’s comments on the same passage produce perhaps the most famous formulation of rabbinic universalism. The two texts thus conform to the reversed patterns observed by recent scholarship and indicate how that scholarship allows us to see exegetical tendencies that we might otherwise underrecognize. Rethinking universalism and particularism among Jews and Christians of Late Antiquity entails also rethinking Scripture in Late Antiquity.

But my purpose here is also to challenge the categories themselves, following the salutary criticism made of them by Anders Runesson.⁴ Applying “universalism” and “particularism” to the Sifra and *Strōmateis*—and before them, to Philo’s and Paul’s treatments of the same passage in Leviticus—becomes so hopelessly complicated, as we shall see, that we might convincingly conclude that the categories should be dispensed with altogether. For the juxtaposition of the Sifra and *Strōmateis* passages will show: (1) the texts’ common commitment to the ethnic language of the Leviticus passage, especially in contrast with Philo’s and Paul’s prior treatments; (2) their shared expansion of Leviticus’s ethnic language; and (3) a complex imbrication of ethnicizing

and universalizing in both passages, as well as in the exegeses by Philo and Paul. Rather than discard the terms “universalism” and “particularism,” as Runesson recommends, I will argue that we should cautiously retain them because of their usefulness for defining ideologies of identity. We must use them, however, with a great deal more suppleness than even the recent wave of scholarship has proposed. I will close with a set of questions that we might productively pose to late antique Jewish and Christian texts utilizing the categories of universalism and particularism, with some reflection on paradigm shifts within the culture of the academy.

Lev 18.1–5 and Its First-Century Career

In Lev 18.1–5, an exhortatory passage within the so-called Holiness Legislation, God instructs the children of Israel to reject the native practices of Egypt and Canaan and to adhere only to God’s laws:⁵

¹The Lord spoke to Moses saying: ²Speak to the Israelite people and say to them: I the Lord am your God. ³Like the practice of the land of Egypt which you dwelled in, you should not practice, and like the practice of the land of Canaan to which I am bringing you, you should not practice, and in their laws you should not go. ⁴My rules you should practice and my laws you should heed to go according to them; I the Lord am your God. ⁵You should heed my laws and my rules, which if a person practices them shall live by them; I am the Lord.⁶

The complex literary patterns of the passage create a forceful opposition between Israel and other peoples.⁷ The opposition is echoed by oppositions between past and future (Egypt in the past, Canaan in the future) and between negative and positive commands (“their laws” versus God’s). A series of parallels among verses 3, 4, and 5 reinforce these oppositions. “You should not practice” in verse 3 parallels “you should practice” in verse 4; “their laws” in verse 3 is parallel to “my laws” in verse 4; “you should not go” in verse 3 parallels “you should heed to go” in verse 4. Verses 4 and 5 are parallel in a chiastic way: “My rules you should practice,” the first part of verse 4, is echoed by the second part of verse 5, “and my rules, which if a person practices.” The second part of verse 4, “my laws you should heed to go,” is echoed by the first part of verse 5,

“You should heed my laws.” Verse 4 and verse 5, both positive commands, thus form a closed chiasmus with each other, while verse 3, the negative command, stands apart. God’s self-declaration in verses 2, 4 (“I the Lord am your God”), and 5 (“I am the Lord”) frames the passage, emphasizing God’s presence before Israel and providing a rationale to Israel for observing God’s laws and for rejecting the practices of others.⁸

Philo invokes Lev 18.1–5 in the course of his “On Mating with the Preliminary Studies” (*De Congressu quaerendae eruditionis gratia*), where he reads the figure of Hagar in Genesis 16 as an allegorical representation of Greek *paideia*.⁹ When Abraham mates with Hagar before he unites with Sarah, we learn that the soul (Abraham) must be trained in school subjects (Hagar) before it can seek virtue (Sarah). In *De Congressu* 83–88, Philo addresses why Abraham’s mating with Hagar takes place ten years after his arrival in Canaan, according to Gen 16.3. To explain the time lag, Philo introduces an elaborate schema of the development of the soul, with Lev 18.1–5 as the blueprint:¹⁰

Now according to nature these are the native-lands of the two ages: Egypt, that is passion, of the age of childhood; Canaan, that is vice, of the age of adolescence. But the holy word, though it knows full well what are the native-lands of our mortal race, sets before us what we should do and what will be for our good, by bidding us hate the habits and the customs and the practices of those lands. It does so in the following words: [Here he quotes Lev 18.1–5].¹¹

So then the true life is the life of him who walks in the judgments and ordinances of God, so that the practices of the godless must be death. And what the practices of the godless are we have been told. They are the practices of passion and vices, from which spring the many multitudes of the impious and the workers of unholiness. So then ten years after our migration to the Canaanites we shall wed Hagar. (Philo, *De Congressu* 83–88)¹²

Egypt is the land of the passions, representing the period of infancy and childhood when one cannot control one’s emotions.¹³ Canaan represents the period of adolescence when vice beckons and the soul has not yet learned how to resist.¹⁴ At this point, one must begin to learn habits of self-restraint. The hazard of not doing so is to stay mired in adolescence and never to reach moral and intellectual maturity. Thus must Abraham wait ten years before he is ready to

mate with Hagar, to teach us of the soul's development and its growing need for proper pedagogical training.

Philo quotes the larger literary unit in Leviticus, but his main interest is verse 3's Egypt and Canaan, whose allegorical equivalencies are the soul's stages of development. When we turn to Paul's citation of the passage in Gal 3.12, we see that he instead isolates verse 5 because of his interest in that verse's theme of life in the Law: "Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the Law; for 'The one who is righteous will live by faith' (Hab 2.4). But the Law does not rest on faith; on the contrary, 'Whoever does the works of the Law will live by them' (Lev 18.5)."¹⁵ This section of Galatians speaks more directly perhaps than any other within Paul's writings to his view of the Law. The section is notoriously hard to follow, with its twists and turns and obscure exegesis, wherein Paul seems to use verses as evidence for a position contrary to one that they would seem to support. This is precisely the difficulty with Lev 18.5, which would seem to valorize observance of the Law, yet Paul appeals to the verse in his efforts to discourage the Galatians from requiring legal observance for new gentile converts. Commentators have devised various ways to make sense of Paul's invocation of the verse and juxtaposition of it with Hab 2.4, including the possibility that he is, in fact, criticizing or rejecting Lev 18.5.¹⁶ Most would agree, however, that whether Paul wishes to reconcile Lev 18.5 with Hab 2.4 or to let the contradiction stand, and whether he reads Lev 18.5 as merely a misleading overemphasis on law or as an altogether false promise of works justification waiting to be discarded (and there are other positions as well), Paul means to denigrate a life oriented toward law and to contrast it critically with a life lived by faith. Whether this means, by way of E. P. Sanders, a rejection of covenantal law in its function as gatekeeper for participation in faith, or by way of James Dunn, a rejection of covenantal law in its supposedly inherent nationalistic exclusivism, or in line with the traditional Lutheran reading, a rejection of law per se as sinful self-righteousness or as an impossibly high standard, can remain an open question.¹⁷ What is significant, for our purposes, is that Lev 18.5 forms part of Paul's argument against the Law, however we may conceive what exactly Paul did not like about it and to what exactly he was referring when he spoke of it. The same can be said for Paul's arguments against the Law in Rom 10.5–9, where he once again cites Lev 18.5:

Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the Law, that "the person who does these things will live by them" (Lev 18.5).¹⁸ But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not

say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ [that is, to bring Christ down] or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ [that is, to bring Christ up from the dead].” But what does it say? “The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart” [that is, the word of faith that we proclaim]: because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Building on a composite citation from Deut 30.12–14, Paul contrasts righteousness that comes from faith with Lev 18.5’s righteousness from law, echoing the contrast in Galatians between Habakkuk and Leviticus (which is active here as well, since Romans begins with a citation of Hab 2.4; Rom 1.16–17). As in Galatians, Lev 18.5 serves a broader argument in Romans (exactly in what way remains as controversial as in Galatians) that faith supersedes law (exactly how, why, and for whom also remain controversial). Paul draws on Lev 18.5, however we disentangle the exegetical strands, in order to de-authorize the Law.

We could contrast Paul’s exegesis of Lev 18.1–5 with Philo’s in a number of ways: Philo’s main interest is the prohibited practices of Egypt and Canaan while Paul’s is God’s law; Philo valorizes God’s law while Paul subordinates it to faith; Philo sidesteps the ethnic separatism of the Leviticus passage by transforming it into moral philosophy, while Paul attacks it head-on by undermining its conceptual foundations. Yet given the choice, we would likely place both Philo’s and Paul’s readings in the trajectory of universalism: Philo ignores the sharp preference that Lev 18.1–5 expresses for an ethnic Israel bounded by a unique set of laws, while Paul outright rejects it.

Clement’s Ethnic Language: A Narrative of Neighbors

Philo and Paul, both Jewish writers of the first century, were preserved by the church, and their absorption within a Christian trajectory points to the conventional construction of Christian universalism. But as we move into the second and third centuries, we find Clement of Alexandria embracing both the ethnic distinctions of Lev 18.1–5 and its concrete behavioral demands in his *Strōmateis*. The structure and logical flow of *Strōmateis* (weavings or carpets or miscellanies), is difficult to pin down, but in the sections of book 2 preceding his citation of Lev 18.1–5, Clement’s main concern is to counter the position of those who disparage fear of the Lord and submission to his

commandments, as exemplified by the Basilideans, Valentinians, and Marcionites (*Strom.* 2.3, 2.6, 2.7–8).¹⁹ According to that position, the parts of Scripture that emphasize the commandments (Clement refers to Ps 111.10 and Prov 1.7) can be discarded as the product of “the Prince” rather than of the true God. In *Strōmateis* 2.10.46–47, Clement would appear to be citing Lev 18.1–5 to prove not only that obedience to the commandments is equal in value to contemplation but also that God himself—not some subsidiary being—claims it so:

46 (1) Our philosopher holds firmly to these three things: first, contemplation (*theōria*); second, fulfilling the commandments (*tēs tōn entolōn epiteleseōs*); third, the formation of good men (*andrōn agathōn kataskeuēs*). When these come together they make the gnostic (*ton gnostikon*).²⁰ Whichever one of these is lacking cripples those [other elements] of gnosis/knowledge. (2) That is why Scripture, inspired by God, says: [here he quotes Lev 18.1–5].²¹

47 (1) Whether Egypt and the land of Canaan symbolize the world and misguidedness, or passions and vices, the text shows us what we have to avoid, and the sorts of things we have to practice, because they belong to God rather than to the world. (2) When Scripture says, “The person who performs them shall live by them” (*ho poiēsas anthrōpos zēsetai en autois*; Lev 18.5),²² it is referring to the upbringing of the Hebrews and of their neighbors, that is, us, which, combined with disciplined practice and progress, means life for them and for us. (3) “For those who are dead through their falling away are brought to life with Christ” (Eph 2.5), thanks to our covenant.²³ (4) Scripture often takes up the words “I am the Lord your God.” It is entreating us to turn around, teaching us to follow the God who has given us the commandments (*tō tas entolas dedōkoti theō*). It is gently reminding us to search for God, and as far as possible to make an effort to know him. This is the highest contemplation (*theōria megistē*), that of the esoteric mysteries (*epoptikē*), real knowledge (*tō onti episteme*) that which becomes unchanging by reason (*hē ametaptōtos logō ginomenē*). This alone is the *gnosis*/knowledge of wisdom (*hē tēs sophias gnosis*), which is never separated from righteous deeds (*dikaiopragma*).²⁴

Clement here claims that contemplation, *theōria*, is but one of three necessary ingredients for true wisdom, along with observance of commandments and the formation of good men.²⁵ Clement's ensuing treatment of Lev 18.1–5 provides evidence for “the sorts of things we have to practice,” which “belong to God rather than to the world” and which “mean life . . . for us.” God's repeated self-declaration in the Leviticus passage seems to resoundingly affirm—disproving the case made by Clement's opponents—that it is no lesser being behind the commandments but God himself who urges us to observe them. The pursuit of the “highest contemplation” cannot leave the commandments behind.²⁶

Borrowing from Philo's *De Congressu*, Clement here reads the Egypt and Canaan of Lev 18.3 as allegorical markers of bad ethics.²⁷ To that extent, the ethnic dimensions of the Leviticus passage are collapsed. But to anchor his arguments on behalf of the commandments, Clement reads the children of Israel in concrete physical terms, creating out of Lev 18.1–5 a narrative of defined social groups with a particular historical relationship that binds them—it is a narrative about neighbors. In Clement's treatment of verse 5, the life-giving laws commanded by God are addressed to “the Hebrews,” but Clement then injects into Lev 18.1–5 another group with a phantom presence, people proximate to the Hebrews, whose identity Clement reveals as “us.”²⁸ What Clement accomplishes in this construction is not only to link “the Hebrews” with “us” in space or time but also to imply that the two groups are of comparable character, that is, two nations or ethnic groups. This is a good example of Buell's “ethnic language” or “ethnic reasoning,” whereby “early Christians texts defined their version of Christianity as a race or ethnicity.”²⁹ Using the narrative models provided by the Hebrew Bible, Clement here borrows the corporateness of biblical Israel while stopping short of identifying fully with it.

Clement's engagement with the passage's ethnic categories is highlighted in his exegesis of Lev 18.5. The verse's universalizing language (“The person who performs them shall live by them”—*ho poiēsas auta anthrōpos zēsetai en autois*) stands out amid the exclusivist instruction of Lev 18.1–4. Clement, in a surprising twist, ethnicizes the one verse in the passage that seems to be framed in universal terms even while he expands its ethnic scope beyond historical Israel. Clement's treatment of Lev 18.1–5, with his injection of Israel's “neighbors” into the Hebrew Bible's narrative, thus contributes to his larger concern in book 2 to justify the Law. Elsewhere in Clement's works, as Buell points out, he offers other models of the Hebrew-Christian relationship: he imagines Christians as a new third people forged from Greeks and Jews

(*Strom.* 6.42.2) and, alternatively, as a people that existed in primordial time.³⁰ But here in his treatment of Lev 18.1–5, in the context of his concern with God’s commandments, Clement envisions the relationship between contemporary Christians and historical Israel not as one of displacement or subsumption but as juxtaposition, a vision designed to lend logic to his claims for the authority of pentateuchal law.³¹

The Sifra’s Universalism: The Gentile Who Does Torah

The Sifra, whose major redaction is usually dated to approximately the middle of the third century, is the main extant corpus of early rabbinic legal midrash on the book of Leviticus.³² The Sifra, traditionally ascribed to the school of R. Akiba, contains its own material commenting on Leviticus 18 but also includes inserted material from the school of R. Yishmael that came to be known as the Mekhilta or Megilta de-Arayot (“A Composition on Sexual Transgressions”), based on the list of sexual prohibitions in Leviticus 18 and 20 on which it comments.³³ The passage within the Mekhilta de-Arayot reads Lev 18.5 to include not only Israel but also gentiles within the purview of God’s laws, issuing what has been read as a bold universalist manifesto:

R. Jeremiah used to say: From where do you say that even a gentile who did the Torah, behold he is like a high priest? Scripture teaches: “. . . which if priests, Levites, and Israel practice . . .” it did not say here, but rather “which if a person (*adam*) practices.” And thus it says, “This is the torah of.” “Priests, Levites, and Israel” it did not say, but rather “This is the torah of a person, etc.” (2 Sam 7.19).³⁴ And thus it says, “Open the gates and let enter.” “Priests, Levites, and Israel” it did not say here, but rather “Open the gates and let enter a righteous gentile, keeper of the faith” (Isa 26.2). . . . Behold even a gentile who does the Torah, behold he is like a high priest. (Sifra *Aḥare Mot*, parasha 9, *perek* 13)³⁵

The reading tactics employed by R. Jeremiah, a somewhat obscure early rabbi who purportedly lived in second-century Palestine, are more explicit than Clement’s.³⁶ R. Jeremiah takes the word *adam* in the verse to be a deliberately inclusive term. R. Jeremiah’s rhetoric goes beyond mere inclusion, however; his hyperbolic claim is that the gentile who “does” Torah—which seems to

mean observance of its law—is like a high priest.³⁷ A gentile profits from observance of the Law as much as any Jew, even a Jew designated to perform the most sacred tasks of worship. The remaining passage buttresses the claim with other biblical verses that use putatively universalizing language, either that of *adam* or the language of *tsadik* (a righteous person) or *tov* (a good person), which, according to this reading, is inclusive of Jews and gentiles.

Marc Hirshman has argued that this universalizing claim can be found scattered throughout Yishmaelan materials in a consistent pattern. This universalism, suggests Hirshman, while it is not tolerant of gentiles qua gentiles, claims that gentiles have access to Israel's revelation. The social historical dimensions of this claim have been much discussed: Does it reflect efforts on the part of rabbis to proselytize gentiles?³⁸ Given the insider quality of the midrash's language and style, R. Jeremiah's claim may at the very least be understood as internal rhetoric intended to praise the Torah for its universal scope, imagining it as doable by and desirable to gentiles. One wonders whether R. Jeremiah's praise of the gentile who does Torah might also have embedded in it some consternation for the Jew who does not. The recent revisionist historiography of Roman Palestine suggests that such a Jew would have been easy to find.³⁹

Universalism or Particularism?

In the exegetical path we have so far seen, our two first-century Jewish writers, later co-opted by the emerging church, offer universalizing readings of a highly particularist passage of pentateuchal law. Our second- or third-century Christian writer instead engages and embraces the ethnic constructs and legal imperatives of the passage, while the second- or third-century rabbinic authors extend them well beyond the anticipated borders. Thus have I shown how the new insights about Jewish universalism and Christian particularism can shed light on reception history and highlight patterns that we had not previously noticed.

The text analysis above, while it confirms the reversal of labels recommended by recent scholarship, suggests that something more is necessary. If we start with Philo's and Paul's readings of Lev 18.1–5, we find that they evade easy classification when it comes to universalism and particularism. Philo construes the addressee of Lev 18.1–5 to be “our mortal race,” indicating that its model of human growth applies to all. Verse 3's “Egypt” and “Canaan”

are developmental phases that every human being must undergo. Verses 4–5's God-given laws serve not to differentiate ethnic Israel from its neighbors but to differentiate those who practice moral restraint from those who indulge their vices. Moreover, Philo's purpose here is not to advocate for the laws of the Torah but for Greek *paideia*. Nevertheless, the true life does belong, according to Philo's reading, to "him who walks in the judgments and ordinances of God," whom we might conclude to be a member of the people Israel. And the Egyptian practices shunned by the verse may have spoken rather concretely to the Alexandrian Philo. So Philo's allegory leaves us uncertain as to just what he thinks of the ethnic separatism of Lev 18.1–5.⁴⁰ Paul's position on ethnic Israel and its relationship to Torah is too complicated and controversial to address briefly; suffice it to say that Paul does not in any clear way reject ethnic Israel as a concept nor does he reject observance of Torah as a desirable state. His readings of Lev 18.5, contextualized within Galatians and Romans, may represent his more universalist leanings in the privileging of faith over law, but the complexity of his exegesis and argument makes it nearly impossible to determine the true quotient of particularism and universalism to be found there.

Clement's *Strom.* 2.10.46–47, I have suggested, betrays a particularist alignment with the ethnic thinking of the Pentateuch. The Hebrews and their proximity to "us" play an important role in Clement's arguments on behalf of the commandments. But we might make comparable claims about the Sifra. The Sifra passage, too, in the midst of its universalist message, is structured by deeply ingrained genealogical categories—the goy, the priest, the Levite, the Israelite. As Hirshman points out, Yishmaelan universalism is of a heavily priestly persuasion. The Sifra passage, even as it shakes up conventional social identities, also reinscribes them, at a time when the continuing relevance of the priests and the Levites was very much under challenge.

Moreover, both passages make strong universalist claims. Clement and the Sifra each contend that pentateuchal law is authoritative not only for Israel but for others as well, and each anchors that contention in the language of Lev 18.5. One might argue, against the parallel, that they begin from very different starting points: for rabbinic readers, the authority of pentateuchal law is a foregone conclusion and its relevance the very foundation of rabbinic Judaism. For Clement and his audience, that law's authority is the subject of intense controversy and its relevance to Christians hotly debated. When Clement reads Leviticus 18's exhortation to observe God's law, he must argue for inclusion of the self; the Sifra, when it extends Leviticus 18's scope, is arguing for inclusion of the Other. Nevertheless, both incontrovertibly move

Lev 18.1–5 beyond ethnic Israel in what might be called a classic universalist reading. Indeed, this Sifra passage is Hirshman's flagship text for speaking of rabbinic universalism. The rhetoric of the passage makes it almost impossible to read otherwise, with its audacious equation of the gentile with the high priest.

We might even go back to Lev 18.1–5 and question its rather blatant particularism: Does the list of sexual taboos that succeeds the passage suggest that, in fact, all other "foreign" practices are fair game for imitation? Or that if Israel's neighbors proved themselves to be less sexually licentious than the ones projected by Leviticus 18, an active intermingling would be permitted or even encouraged? The implications of Lev 18.1–5 may not be so obviously separatist, after all.⁴¹

New Questions

The Sifra and the *Strōmateis* in their exegesis of Lev 18.1–5, in their respective complexity and their surprising parallelism, invite us to rethink for both rabbis and Christians in what way and to what extent the two "movements" (if we can conglomerate various texts and teachings into such collectives) were either universalist or particularist in their orientation toward each other and toward the broader Roman world in which both were situated. Let us ask instead how universalism and particularism interacted within and across individual rabbinic and Christian texts, as well as within the exegetical texts that preceded them, such as Philo's and Paul's, and, finally, within the biblical corpus itself. A productive set of questions might look like this:

1. What are the universalist and particularist elements of a text, and how do they interact? To what end, and to what effect?
2. What imperialist ambitions are encoded in the text's universalism, and what fluidity of identity is permitted by the text's particularism? In other words, in what ways do the universalist and particularist elements each bear traces of the other?
3. How are universalist and particularist passages of Scripture received by the late ancient readers who concretized them as canon? How do readers embrace or resist, rework or revise, the extremely complex weave of universalism and particularism already found in Scripture?

The first question requires careful literary analysis, the second question more sustained critical reflection, and the third a concern with exegetical dynamics.

What does this set of questions help us to see that we might not see if we were to discard the messy categories of universalism and particularism, as Runesson advises? To answer the question, we must first address the problems that Runesson identifies in the categories. Runesson shows just how slippery have been the uses of “universalism” and “particularism” by contemporary scholars of Judaism and Christianity in Late Antiquity. Even Donaldson, who accepts the terms, admits the diverse ways in which they can be applied, and he organizes his sourcebook on Jewish universalism accordingly.

The categories can refer specifically to the degree to which proselytizing is undertaken: the universalist attempts to bring in nonmembers, while the particularist either ignores or rejects them. The terms might also refer to whether conversion is required of those proselytes: the universalist accepts proselytes for who they are, while the particularist requires them to change and to formally join the group. The terms may refer more broadly to attitudes toward gentiles: the universalist speaks respectfully of gentiles and/or recognizes their capacity for relationship with God, while the particularist engages in demonizing rhetoric and/or denies them any divine favor. Synonymous terms for particularism in this usage might include exclusivism, nationalism, and exceptionalism; and for universalism, we might see inclusivism and pluralism.

Two binaries related to universalism and particularism frequently operate either explicitly or implicitly: faith and law; and religion and race. Universalism, with its openness to all peoples and to what are likely divergent practices, seems linked with faith and grace, while particularism, with its closed circle of group membership and tendency toward strictly prescribed behavior, appears to entail homogeneous and historically inherited legal observance. According to this logic, universalism is predicated on faith, and particularism on law. Relatedly, universalism often represents a “religion” disembedded from most other markers of identity, while particularism gets closely tied up with indices that are perceived to be ingrained and immovable, such as genealogy, ethnicity, or race. These clusters of meaning can be found in the passages that I have examined, where the ethnic entities of Lev 18.1–5 are intimately linked with the laws that God commands, if not almost wholly defined by them.

Runesson concludes that the terms have simply become too imprecise to be useful, and they sometimes result in contradictory conclusions—Pauline Christianity is not universalist, for example, when the term refers to granting the potential of salvation to people outside the movement, but it is universalist

when the term refers to proselytizing outsiders. Runesson is certainly right that we would do well to define our terms when we use them. But that is always the case, since no word's meaning is ever self-evident. He may still be right that the terms are too imprecise for writing social history, but he is less right about texts. If we are examining social historical phenomena such as proselytizing or conversion, it is indeed preferable to speak explicitly about those phenomena. But if we use the terms in their broadest sense as referring to ideological elements rather than to social phenomena, the terms become useful again. Universalism and particularism might help to describe the feel of a text, the impressions it leaves, the direction of its rhetoric. Moreover, we can exploit the clusters of meaning with which these terms are associated. Retaining universalism and particularism may allow us to more deeply explore its partner dichotomies: faith and law; and religion and race. The more headway we make on the first binary, the firmer can be our grasp of the other two, whose histories are even more politicized, and from whose discursive power we will probably never break free, even if we wished. Finally, and most importantly, the categories of universalism and particularism, more so than faith and law or race and religion, invite us to consider the extraordinarily subtle means by which identity has been and continues to be defined in relation to some Other. Universalism and particularism, as terms that directly address the character of collective self-construction, bring into focus the dialectic between self and other, native and foreigner, the familiar and the strange, that stands at the heart of humanistic inquiry and to which the study of Judaism and Christianity in Late Antiquity has much to contribute.

The terms themselves are less important—Should we continue to use them? Should we discard them? How many people, even scholars, are invested in such a debate?—than our capacity to offer a nuanced and compelling understanding of “the Bible as it was” and the early history of Jewish and Christian self-definition. The categories, in any event, have the feel of belonging to earlier decades of scholarship, perhaps the 1970s and 1980s, before postcolonialism's preference for the language of race and ethnicity had gained full traction. Universalism and particularism seem part of the aftermath of Vatican II's *Nostra Aetate* and efforts to rejigger the relative representation of Judaism and Christianity, a project in which we are still evidently firmly enmeshed. Most likely, the terms will naturally fade away because of the shifting sands of scholarly interests, obviating the need to argue against them. But in the meantime, as the terms stand and while they still do, they may help us to chart the long afterlives of Scripture's myth of our origins.

CHAPTER 2

The Kingdom of Edessa and the Creation of a Christian Aristocracy

WILLIAM ADLER

Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* creates the impression that the history of the early church was mainly one of struggle and conflict: first with the Jews, then with heretics, and then with Rome. While that approach is of a piece with the triumphalism of the work, part of the story gets lost along the way. That includes Christians living to the east of the empire. This is regrettable because Christian interactions with centers of power there were sometimes less fraught than those with Rome.

One such place was Edessa, a Silk Road caravan city on the frontier between the Parthian and Roman Empires and the capital of a small northern Mesopotamian kingdom in modern-day southeastern Turkey. Anyone who assumes that Christians of the early third century were an embattled religious minority will be hard-pressed to explain the prominence of Christian aristocrats in the court of Abgar the VIII, an Edessene king of the late second and early third century CE, also known as Abgar the Great (176–211). Julius Africanus (ca. 160–240), a Christian polymath probably best known as the author of a universal chronicle, spent time in Abgar's court, even tutoring the king's son Ma'nu.¹ There he also struck up an acquaintance with the Christian aristocrat Bardaisan (154–222), known to Greek readers as Bardesanes.

Students of early Christianity, following the testimony of later Syriac Christian sources, once ascribed Abgar's friendship with both Africanus and Bardaisan to a shared religious identity. Francis C. Burkitt, one of the earliest exponents of this view, went so far as to suggest that Abgar legitimized his

conversion to Christianity by propagating the legend about the conversion of the kingdom of Edessa during the reign of Abgar V “the Black” (4 BCE–7 CE; 13–50 CE).² More recent studies of the evidence, however, have helped to discredit the notion of Abgar the Great as the first Christian king of Edessa.³ Abgar was not hostile to Christians, who, by the time of his reign, may have made up a significant segment of the Edessene community.⁴ But if he was a Christian, he kept his religious leanings well concealed. Coins, monuments, and funerary mosaics from Abgar’s reign suggest no change in the public face of Edessene religion or in the official status of Christianity.⁵

If Abgar the Great was not himself a Christian, or even, to use Burkitt’s language, “half a Christian,”⁶ we need to look elsewhere to grasp his relationship with his Christian courtiers. As I want to demonstrate, a better understanding of their integration into Abgar’s court has broader implications for the study of identity formation and elite culture in the Hellenistic Near East of Late Antiquity. As a means of describing the dynamic social and cultural landscape of Edessene society in the early third century, the binary categories of “pagan” and “Christian” can sometimes obscure more than they illuminate.

Edessene Court Culture during the Reign of Abgar the Great

Syrian Christianity of the second and third centuries produced its share of ascetics and culture warriors.⁷ Greek *paideia* was the target of some of this antipathy. Among Hellenized Syrians, Greek culture stirred both pride and anxiety. The second-century satirist and rhetor Lucian of Samosata, whose self-identification oscillates between “Greek” and “Syrian,” recalls how, as a youth, he wandered aimlessly in Ionia, still speaking with “a foreign accent” and wearing Assyrian attire; there he encountered personified Rhetoric, who cared for and educated him.⁸ Christianity added a third variable into the equation, offering the disaffected an outlet for cultural resentments. Tatian (ca. 120–180), for example, “born in the land of the Assyrians and educated at first in your (Greek) doctrines,” told his readers that he was opting out of Greek culture altogether and embracing the “barbarian philosophy” of Christianity (*Oratio ad Graecos* 42).⁹

Self-marginalizing behavior like that was far removed from the worldview of Christians in Abgar’s court. Julius Africanus, whose secular learning extended beyond Christian circles, wore his Greek learning with pride. Africanus’s Edessene associate, the bilingual Bardaisan, reveals little of Tatian’s

animosity to everything Greek. Later sources say that he even sent his son to Athens for a Greek education (Sozomen, *HE* 3.16; Theodoret, *Haereticarum fabularum compendium*, PG 83.372).¹⁰ His students translated his numerous Syriac treatises into Greek (Eusebius, *HE* 4.30.1); and the celebrated *Book of the Laws of Countries*, composed in his name, assumed the form of the Greek dialogue. Nor was he a world-renouncing ascetic. Ephrem, one of his harshest critics, would later ridicule Bardaisan's costly attire and precious gems.¹¹ He was, as Hans Drijvers has written, "an aristocrat in every sense of the word."¹² This is what we would expect from Christians at home in the cosmopolitan court culture of early third-century Edessa.¹³

Hellenistic kings commonly recruited a circle of confidants from the learned classes; their functions might include acting as ambassadors, court philosophers, teachers, artists, and advisers.¹⁴ One well-known example is Cassius Longinus (ca. 213–273), the critic, scholar, teacher of rhetoric, and philosopher who, in his later years (ca. 268), assumed a more public role as tutor, minister, and adviser to Zenobia, queen of the Syrian kingdom of Palmyra.¹⁵ Bardaisan and Julius Africanus performed similar professional functions in Edessa. We have no way of knowing for certain what brought Africanus, a Palestinian by birth, to "the Athens of the East."¹⁶ But it must have been by royal invitation. Many years later, Africanus would recall dividing his time in Edessa tutoring the king's son Ma'nu and joining in the leisure activities of the Edessene elite. Africanus obviously thought well of Abgar; in his chronicle, he calls him a "holy man (*hieron andra*)," high praise for a non-Christian king and further testimony of his kinship with him.¹⁷

Those "friends of the king" on the most intimate terms with the king were often childhood companions who embodied the cultural values and ideals of the monarchy.¹⁸ This is how Epiphanius, the late fourth-century Christian heresiologist, characterizes the relationship that existed between Abgar and his learned courtier Bardaisan. As Epiphanius represents it, Bardaisan, a fixture in the Edessene court, was "from the very beginning close with Abgar ruler of the Edessenens, collaborating with him, and at the same time partaking of his *paideia* (*tēs autou metaschōn paideias*)."¹⁹ While "partaking of the king's *paideia*" could mean many things, it does, at the least, imply a personal friendship born of a shared education and cultural outlook.

Epiphanius, for his part, expresses dismay that a Syrian gentleman who started out so well—a nobleman of the highest rank, a friend of a highly educated (*logiōtatō*) king, and an orthodox Christian—would allow himself to slide so easily into the Valentinian heresy. His disappointment with

Bardaisan's decline typifies the generally low opinion of him among orthodox Christians of the late fourth century. By that time, Bardaisan had become *persona non grata* in Christian circles. But no one could question the many talents of a man, in Epiphanius's words, "richly adorned in every way (*ho anērtā panta megalōs ēn kekosmēmenos*)."²⁰ Although his literary remains are meager, Bardaisan is credited with a formidable array of accomplishments: fluent in Greek and Syriac, erstwhile astrologer, poet, musician, master of dialectic, theologian, ethnographer, historian, and patron of the arts.²¹ To hear Africanus tell it, he was also an exceptional archer, able to produce the likeness of a handsome Syrian man with his arrows. "Like a skilled painter," Africanus later writes in the *Cesti*, "Bardaisan transferred his likeness to the shield that he was holding. He first created a figure of his head with straight arrows, making a likeness of the circular shape of the head, then the sparkles of the eyes, the symmetry of the lips, and the graceful curve of the cheeks; after that the representation of the rest of the man conformed to the shape of his body."²² Africanus's rather vivid description of the process says something about his own education: he obviously had mastered the device of *ekphrasis*.

Africanus recalls an Edessene court spending much of its leisure time parading its expertise with the bow. An aristocrat identified by Africanus as "Syrmos the Scythian" transformed two arrows into mismatched warriors:

Syrmos took a position, equipped with the quiver and an arrow at the ready, and prepared to shoot. And there stood opposite him, at a certain distance, another counter-archer. But the archery contest was one-sided, for the one went into battle with an armed arrow, but the other with a stripped one. Now the objective was to pit one arrow against the other. But the one arrow would come out as an unarmed soldier against a fully armed foe. And bold it was. Because had it not been stripped, it would impale the opposing arrow, and drag it along, attached to it like an enemy prisoner; but the stripped arrow, now that it had been captured, was no longer an arrow, but an arrow's spoil.²³

Abgar's son Ma'nu exhibited his own skills with the bow during a hunt for big game. Royal hunts in the ancient Near East were tightly scripted.²⁴ For one thing, Persian and Parthian kings reserved for themselves the privilege of shooting the first arrow or throwing the first spear. As a gesture of high-mindedness, a king or prince might suspend the practice; on one outing, for

example, the young Cyrus is said to have overruled a royal command from his grandfather Astyages prohibiting anyone from casting his spear before Cyrus was finished hunting.²⁵ But a breach of protocol could be costly. Artaxerxes I reportedly had one of his courtiers beheaded for killing a wild lion before the king had a chance at him.²⁶ Edessene noblemen in Abgar's court understood the prerogatives of royalty. Africanus was invited to ride along but only as a spectator. When a wild bear leaped out from his lair, the prince's entourage reacted in (staged?) horror, allowing the crown prince to slay the bear single-handedly and thereby prove his capacity to lead. "While everyone else was terrified and [seeking] ways to flee," Africanus writes, "Ma'nu exhorted us to be bold," coolly disabling the bear with two arrows between the eyes.²⁷

One regular pastime with the bow and arrow was not a display of artistry or arrows in combat. It was, rather, a scientific experiment designed to measure the distance that an arrow would travel on a continuous twenty-four-hour trajectory. To conduct the test, several archers were made to stand opposite a target, at a distance of a plethron (about thirty meters). For one hour's duration, each would shoot an arrow in immediate succession. As with any well-designed scientific experiment, allowance had to be made for variables—in this case, the time lag between archers and variability in the length of the hour. Once all these factors were taken into account, the experiment determined that over the course of a standard hour, an arrow would traverse a distance of 1,000 stades, hence 24,000 stades in a single day. The test transfixed the Edessene aristocracy. Everyone got into the act: Syrmos, Bardaisan, the crown prince Ma'nu, and Africanus himself, acting in the capacity of Ma'nu's mentor and coach.²⁸

Africanus describes an Edessene court of mixed ethnic composition: there was "Syrmos the Scythian" and "Bardaisan the Parthian," and Africanus himself, born in Jerusalem. As Fergus Millar has demonstrated, ethnic identification of Near Eastern peoples in the third century was unstable; depending on the point you wanted to make, the same person might variously be called a Syrian, an Assyrian, a Parthian, or a Babylonian.²⁹ Ancient descriptions of Bardaisan the Parthian as a "Mesopotamian," a "Babylonian," and an "Armenian," amply illustrate Millar's observation.³⁰

What betrayed Bardaisan as a "Parthian," or Syrmos as a "Scythian"? While the distinctive costume of Parthian and Scythian archers might have been an identifying marker, the meaning of their ethnicity extends beyond clothing.³¹ Greeks and Romans viewed Scythians and Parthians with a mixture of admiration and contempt shown to many foreign and potentially menacing

peoples.³² That ambivalence extended to their vaunted skills in archery. While Greek authors from the time of Herodotus recognized the centrality of archery to Persian and Scythian warfare and cultural identity, they tended to dismiss it as an inferior form of combat (Herodotus 1.136.2; Strabo 15.3.18).³³ Lucian trades on these perceptions in his description of an imaginary Scythian named “Toxaris.” Deified by the Athenians after his death as the “foreign physician,” Toxaris, a Scythian “of high ability but lowly origins,” had come to Athens out of a “longing for Greek *paideia* (*paideias epithumia tēs ‘Ellenikēs*)” (Scythian 1; trans. K. Kilburn, LCL). Over time, he had so fully integrated into Athenian society that Anacharis, another Scythian immigrant, could no longer recognize him as a fellow countryman (Lucian, *Scythian* 3). Although Lucian probably invented his name because it called to mind the Greek word for “bow,” the Hellenized Toxaris does not play to type. A carving on his tomb featured a Scythian with a strung bow in one hand and a book in the other (Lucian, *Scythian* 2). In Lucian’s *On Friendship*, the Greek Mnesippus expresses surprise when Toxaris defies the stereotype of the ill-tempered Scythian skilled only in warfare and archery and shows himself to be a good friend, an able orator, and even a talented painter (*Toxaris* 8).³⁴

The courtiers of Edessa went a step further: archery *was* painting. More than a simple tool of war, archery in Edessa was now a mark of breeding and refinement: a demonstration of royal virtue, a scientific instrument, and a fine art—an exciting, but peaceable and aesthetic pursuit. Bardaisan, Africanus writes, “took pride in having combined the art of painting with the use of the bow. . . . As we looked on, we marveled that the archery was not a martial pursuit, but rather somewhat enjoyable, and a pleasurable danger (*ti . . . terpon kai kindunos hēdonē*).”³⁵ While their costume might have identified them as exotic foreigners, the cosmopolitan noblemen of Edessa shared a common *paideia* that transcended ethnic particularity.

Edessa’s Archive Culture

When he was not pursuing the cultural diversions of Edessene elites, Africanus spent time examining relics and, we are told in one later source, transcribing royal archives. By the late third century, the official archives of Edessa had become internationally famous, thanks largely to a piece of local Christian lore claiming that they housed letters exchanged between Jesus himself and Abgar V. Eusebius’s publication of a Greek translation of these letters (*HE* 1.13)

catapulted Edessa's archives into international prominence. The epistolary exchange between Abgar and Jesus is almost universally dismissed nowadays as a pious fraud, a product of a Christian Edessa interested in legitimating itself by tracing its roots there back to the time of Jesus. Nevertheless, these traditions and related stories about Edessa's official store of records tell us something valuable about Edessene archive culture in Late Antiquity. While the whole subject would certainly repay further study, we need only touch on those aspects of the question that bear directly on the careers and intellectual development of Christians in the court of pre-Christian Edessa.

If we can speak of any one defining element of Edessene society, it was the public archives. The prominent location of the building that housed them made it into something of a landmark. To help orient its readers about the site of a pagan festival in Edessa during the reign of Abgar VII, the Syriac *Acts of Sharbil* locates it "near the great altar which is in the center of the city opposite the office of records."³⁶ Edessa took the delivery and preservation of its official records very seriously. Even private commercial documents were entrusted to the care of an official courier. A memorandum at the head of a Dura contract for the sale of a slave girl (*P.Dura* 28), dating to 243 CE and marked for deposit in the archive of the "renowned city of Edessa," describes the delivery of the document "by courier" to the master of taxes.³⁷

The use of a public official for the conveyance of private contracts is highly unusual; and one can hardly imagine how all private contracts could have received the royal treatment without overwhelming the postal system. But it is a good indication of the bureaucratization of Edessene society so amply illustrated in the *Doctrina Addai*, a fifth-century Syriac account of the conversion of Edessa. The *Doctrina* would have us believe that nothing of any significance ever happened in the city without bureaucrats on hand to record and notarize it. There was a paper trail for everything. According to the *Doctrina*, Hanan the archivist and other emissaries from Edessa personally witnessed extraordinary events after arriving in Jerusalem with Abgar's letter for Jesus. But it is not enough simply for them to tell King Abgar what they had seen with their own eyes. Hanan then has to read an official transcript of the events that he had recorded as he witnessed them; only then do the jaws of the king and his court slacken in amazement. "He was speechless and astonished," the author writes, "so were his nobles who were standing before him."³⁸ Oral testimony is not to be believed unless it has a written text or a visual object to make the events come to life.

The language used to describe the archiving of Edessa's official documents

reeks of officialdom. According to the *Doctrina*, Labubna, the royal scribe, preserved in writing every wonder that the apostle Addai performed in the Edessene court after Christ's resurrection. But this was not due to the spectacular events taking place; it is just the way things were always done. "As is the custom in the court of King Abgar and in all kingdoms," the author writes, "everything said before him is written and placed among the records."³⁹ Nor do these written records of Addai's miracles and healings receive any special treatment. If anything, the conclusion of the story is a deflating anticlimax. Labubna first composes a written record of what happened, which is then witnessed, notarized, and cataloged by the archivist Hanan. Rather than being sealed up in a shrine or segregated in a special room, the record of Addai's acts in Abgar's court is simply archived alongside the other royal books, statutes, and ordinances, as well as records "of those who buy and sell."⁴⁰

This may seem like rather ordinary treatment of a record of truly extraordinary events. But that is precisely the point. Since even pedestrian commercial contracts were maintained, in the author's words, with utmost "care and concern," nothing else needed to be done.⁴¹ The professionalism of the scribal class was enough to vouchsafe the accuracy of the official account of Addai's acts at Abgar's court. Over and over, Christian sources of Edessa celebrate the brisk efficiency of its technocrats and the unassailable authority of its archives. The formulaic language of bureaucracy reassures readers that everything is aboveboard, according to the books. Edessa's investment in the accuracy of its official documents conferred enormous prestige on its archive personnel. In the Dura bill of sale, the title of the official courier is *aggaros*, a Persian word for the legendary mounted horseman of the Persian royal chancery.⁴² In Syriac sources, the secretary (*tabulara* = Lat. *tabularius*) charged with archiving records is called variously "prefect over the archives of Edessa" and the *sharir*, an official title meaning something like "the trusted one" or the king's confidant.⁴³ Of course, the *tabularius* par excellence was Hanan, the official responsible for archiving the letters of Jesus and Abgar the IV. Hanan does much more than catalog documents. He is also scribe, courier, courtier, and even the king's official artist. When he is in Jerusalem, he both records Jesus' letter to Abgar and draws his portrait. Both artifacts, the letter and the picture, become part of the royal register: the portrait hung in the king's place and the letter sealed in the "office of records."

By the third century, Edessa's archive had become a central depository of all sorts of documents. If we can trust the testimony of the Armenian historian Moses of Chorene, commingling of royal, sacred, and commercial records in a

single repository began almost with the founding of the city.⁴⁴ Under Roman rule, secular and religious archives continued to be administered by a single official, one of whom is self-identified in the Dura papyrus as “Aurelius Man-nus, overseer of the sacred and civic [documents].”⁴⁵ It is not at all difficult to imagine why successive regimes left the existing system in place. Aside from its administrative value, it was also an effective instrument of social control. Concentrating sacred, commercial, and royal documents in a single location denied Edessa’s temple and priesthood the autonomy found in other kingdoms of the ancient Near East.⁴⁶ Christian Edessa was also happy with the same arrangement, contributing records of its own local history there to an ever-expanding corpus of documents.

One important consequence of this was the rapid absorption of Christianity into the official history of the city. It also made Edessa’s archive an excellent resource for historians. Eusebius calls the archive “a record of ancient times” (*HE* 1.13.5). Local histories stake their credibility on the reputation of the court scribes and notaries tasked with creating and maintaining these records. In the Edessene *Martyrdom of Barsamya*, for example, the author writes of having discovered in “a correct volume of the archives” the date of the incarnation of Christ; this volume, he adds, “errs not at all in what it declares.”⁴⁷ One form of historical research for which Edessa’s royal records were obviously well suited was the chronicle.⁴⁸ Official *acta* and dated lists of magistrates, consuls, kings, and Olympic victors were the lifeblood of the ancient chronicle. Before the Hellenistic age, the writing of a universal chronicle would have been unthinkable: a supply of written documents necessary for the task simply did not exist. The genre owes its existence to the improved availability and credibility of written sources made possible by the requirements of Hellenistic bureaucracies for accurate records and with them the foundation of libraries and city archives. Because of the natural affinity between public documents and the study of chronology, the great universal chroniclers of the Hellenistic age were generally not historians in the traditional sense but rather librarians, bibliophiles, and antiquarians. The one name that comes immediately to mind is Eratosthenes of Cyrene (280–220 BCE), the third librarian of the Museion in Alexandria and, among his many other accomplishments, the author of the first technical work on chronology.⁴⁹

Christianity also produced its own Eratosthenes: Africanus the Edessene aristocrat and father of the Christian universal chronicle. Africanus, an antiquarian if ever there was one, fits the profile of the ancient chronicler to a tee. If we can accept his own testimony, Africanus seems to have spent his

time doing little else but scouring libraries and public records and chasing down antiquities, relics, and manuscripts. Edessa was the perfect incubator for someone of such temperament. In his chronicle, Africanus reports that Edessa had in its possession the shepherd's tent of Jacob; unfortunately, it went up in flames after being struck by a thunderbolt.⁵⁰ He is also credited with having consulted the Edessene archive in the writing of this chronicle. In his history of Armenia, Moses of Chorene reports having found in the fifth book of Africanus's chronicle a record of the kings of Armenia that he had transcribed from "the charters of the archives of Edessa."⁵¹ In the same work, Moses also claims to have consulted a history of Armenia composed by Africanus's friend Bardaisan and based on temple records that Bardaisan found in the Armenian fortress city of Ani. While scholars are rightly skeptical of the veracity of both reports, it should not obscure the larger point: the role of Edessa's archive culture in the creation of its learned class. Moses concedes that Bardaisan was a heretic; by his time, it was impossible not to do so. But he assures his readers that the accuracy of his archive-based history was unimpeachable; this was because Bardaisan was "a cultured man."⁵²

Edessene Christian Aristocrats and Rome

In his treatise *On Salaried Posts in Great Houses*, Lucian describes the fragile existence of the philosopher, rhetor, or poet for hire. The surface prestige associated with the position hardly compensated for the loss of freedom and anxiety over losing favor with a wealthy but unlettered patron. Longinus's own experience in Palmyra is a cautionary tale. Warwick Ball may be correct in describing his position in the court of Zenobia as a "well-endowed provincial sinecure" for an academic mercenary.⁵³ But there were trade-offs. For a man of letters memorably described by Eunapius as "a kind of living library and walking museum" (*Lives of the Sophists* 4.1.3), Palmyra turned out to be a cultural backwater. "Do not hope for anything new of my own," Longinus writes in a letter to his former student Porphyry, "or even for the earlier works that you tell me you have lost." A shortage of books and trained copyists in Palmyra precluded either thing (Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus* 19).⁵⁴ Longinus's entanglements with Palmyrene politics proved far costlier. Attaching himself to a vulnerable Syrian kingdom sitting on the unstable frontier between Rome and Sassanid Persia ultimately cost Longinus his life. After the emperor Aurelian seized control of Palmyra and put Zenobia on trial, the queen blamed

Longinus for encouraging her to defy Rome. “The emperor at once inflicted on him the death penalty,” Zosimus writes, “which Longinus endured so nobly that he consoled even those who were indignant in their complaints against his suffering” (*Historia nova* 1.56.3).

Zenobia’s precipitating blunder was a defiant letter that she had written to the emperor, purportedly on the advice of Longinus (*Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Aurelian*, 26–27, 30).⁵⁵ While Abgar the Great tried to pursue a more judicious course in his earlier dealings with Rome, the results were no less disastrous for his kingdom and for his courtiers. Although Abgar initially opposed Roman expansion in the Near East, he later supported Septimius Severus in his campaign against the Parthians, at the same time taking measures necessary to maintain peace with Rome. Abgar Romanized his name to Lucius Aelius Aurelius Septimius Abgarus. Following Severus’s rout of the Parthians in 197–198 CE, Osroëne was declared a client state and Abgar recognized as “king of kings.”⁵⁶

But in his subsequent dealings with Severan Rome, the king’s skill in integrating the various ethnic and religious groups of the region and in managing the political demands of a small Hellenistic kingdom on the borders of Parthia and Rome soon deserted him. As a token of his goodwill to Rome, Abgar enacted measures designed at least nominally to purge Edessa of local religious practices that he feared would offend Roman sensibilities. One of these reforms may have involved the abolition of the ritual of voluntary castration by male adherents to the cult of the Syrian goddess Atargatis. *The Book of the Laws of Countries* states that almost overnight, Abgar abolished this practice by ordering the amputation of the hands of anyone who took part in it (*BLC* 58.20–23). According to Cassius Dio, Abgar—whether he means Abgar the Great or his son Ma’nu is unclear⁵⁷—claimed that he had taken draconian measures such as this to “compel his subjects to convert to Roman customs (*es ta tōn Rhōmaiōn ēthē methistasthai ēnankazen*).” But the policy miscarried disastrously. Although Abgar may have been right in supposing that the Romans would find ritual castration scandalous, they were equally appalled by involuntary amputation. All Abgar’s high-minded talk about Romanization, Dio writes, was just a pretext. Its real intent was to demonstrate the absolute control that he wielded over his countrymen (Cassius Dio 77.12.1a–77.12.1). What Abgar had hoped would be perceived as a token of his deference to Roman mores thus came across as nothing more than the cruelty of an Oriental despot. It was a fatal misunderstanding. Although the text of Dio is fragmentary here, it appears to imply that Abgar’s crude attempt at coerced Romanization

was at least partially to blame for the fall of the Edessene royal house. Tricked into coming to Rome by the emperor Caracalla, he was arrested and imprisoned. After that, Dio says, “Edessa was left without a king” (77.12.1–2).⁵⁸

Miscalculations like this inevitably embroiled prominent members of the royal court. Abgar’s misreading of the Roman mind was ruinous both for his kingdom and for his Christian friends and courtiers, more so apparently for Bardaisan than it was for Africanus. The admittedly fragmentary witnesses to Bardaisan’s life post-Edessa depict a man struggling to right himself after the calamity of Roman colonization. According to Epiphanius, Bardaisan remained in Edessa up to the bitter end, steadfastly refusing to renounce his Christianity under pressure from Antoninus, an agent of Caracalla. Bardaisan was not a fatalist. *The Book of the Laws of Countries* attributed to him is mostly a critique of astral determinism. But in that work, he does consign some events in life to the control of the stars, including the time of one’s death (*BLC* 34.5–10).⁵⁹ That conviction emboldened him against his Roman tormenters. Bardaisan, Epiphanius writes, told Antoninus that he did not fear death, which he said would come about by necessity, no matter what Rome decided to do against him. His persistence, which almost cost him his life, earned him the admiration even of the otherwise hostile Epiphanius. “He opposed Apollonius, the friend of Antoninus,” Epiphanius writes, “when he was asked to deny the claim that he was a Christian. But . . . he responded courageously with wise words about religion, saying that he did not fear death, which he said would occur by necessity (*anankē*), even if he did not oppose the emperor.”⁶⁰ Accounts of Bardaisan’s life after that shade off into legend. Moses of Chorene reports that Bardaisan, now in exile and under pressure from Rome, retreated to Armenia. Following a failed campaign to propagate the Christian gospel among the local population, he withdrew to the fortress city of Ani; there, after reading, and then updating the temple archives and translating them into Syriac, he composed his history of the kings of Armenia, which was subsequently translated into Greek. Moses’ story has too many holes to accept at face value.⁶¹ It is more likely at least partly the product of a certain romanticizing of the multitalented Edessene “renaissance man,” paying Armenia the supreme honor of writing for her a famous local history based on local archives. Still, there is a certain poignancy to the image of this cosmopolitan Christian Edessene expatriate washing his hands of the unlettered pagans of Armenia and seeking solace in the comforting familiarity of temple archives.

What Porphyry says about Bardaisan post-Edessa is more credible and

more revealing. In his *De abstinencia*, Porphyry recalls an ethnographic treatise on India that Bardaisan composed after interviewing a delegation traveling from India to Rome. The work, or at least Porphyry's two excerpts from it, shows it to be a remarkable piece of ethnographic writing. Neither a tendentious piece of Christian propaganda nor a rehash of obsolete traditions about India, it presents a reasonably well-informed and up-to-date account of Indian judicial practices and the spiritual and ascetic discipline and social standing of the Brahmins and "Samanaeans," the latter an apparent reference to the Buddhists (Porphyry, *De abstinencia*, 4.17).⁶²

By the second century, the Brahmins had acquired a reputation among Greek authors as a caste standing outside and above the established political order. Because powerful nations are not in the habit of being ruled directly by philosophers, writes Dio Chrysostom in his oration on kingship, they commonly appoint philosophers and sages as "superintendents and officers for their kings." While accustomed to giving orders, the kings of these nations defer to their advice about affairs of state. The Druids, magi, and Brahmins are his lead examples; in all these cases, "the kings were not permitted to do or plan anything without the assistance of these wise men, so that in truth it was they who ruled, while the kings became their servants and the ministers of their will" (Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 49.7; trans. H. L. Crosby, LCL). What Flinterman calls the "inverted hierarchical relationship between rulers and their *sumbouloi*" is also what impressed Bardaisan about the Brahmins.⁶³ The Brahmins, he writes, are a priestly caste with a pedigree, all of them descending from a single mother and father. Because of their universally recognized standing in Indian society, they are exempt from taxation and answer to no one, not even kings, the latter consulting them and the Samanaeans on pressing matters and soliciting their intercession with the gods in times of crisis (Porphyry, *De abstinencia*, 4.10).⁶⁴ The autonomy of the Brahmins in Indian society must have made a durable impression on Bardaisan's thinking. In *The Book of the Laws of Countries*, they reappear—in this case, as an example of a social class that has transcended the odious customs of the ambient culture (*BLC* 42.1–23).

It is not difficult to imagine why Bardaisan, the champion of liberty and free will, exiled adviser, and former confidant of the now deposed Abgar, would have found the Brahmins' privileged role in Indian society and their sovereign independence such a compelling story. But his interview with the Indian embassy was more than a matter of indulging an interest in a group with which he felt some personal affinity. It also presented an opportunity to

make an overture to Rome. Bardaisan met the delegation during the reign of Caracalla's successor, Antoninus Elagabalus, at a time when he was beginning to regain his footing.⁶⁵ According to Moses of Chorene, the history of Armenia that he completed during his reign made him famous; Bardaisan even took the initiative to write a letter to the emperor.⁶⁶ The encounter with the Indian delegation traveling to Rome opened up another possibility: to offer Rome the expertise of an easterner—a "Babylonian"—about the customs and peoples of a kingdom living to the east of the Parthian kingdom. The timing made good sense. Elagabalus was a fellow Syrian, born in the nearby city of Emesa of a Syrian mother. His former Edessene colleague Africanus must have recognized in Elagabalus the same opportunity. For at the end of his reign, Africanus was also introducing himself in Rome—in this case, not by interviewing a delegation traveling there but by presiding over one himself. How Africanus reinvented himself after the fall of Edessa illustrates in microcosm a process taking place on a larger scale throughout the eastern Mediterranean in the second and early third centuries CE: the Romanization of the Greek-speaking educated elites of the East.⁶⁷

Julius Africanus's Self-Reinvention in Rome

Unlike Bardaisan, Africanus has left us no stories about resistance to Roman imperial agents or about exile in a remote corner of Asia. His exploits assumed a different form, mainly adventures in archives and libraries throughout Egypt and the Near East, buying antiquities, examining relics, visiting sites of local interest, and generally burnishing his credentials as an expert on everything. His reading tastes were eclectic. In Egypt, he purchased a book purportedly written by Pharaoh Suphis and titled the "Sacred Book." "I acquired it in Egypt," he writes in his chronicle, "because it was a great treasure (*mega chrēma*)."⁶⁸ His most celebrated discovery was a copy of the *Odyssey*, whose account of the *Nekyia* included the actual incantation that Odysseus recited to conjure up the dead (*Od.* 11). Africanus claims to know of manuscripts attesting this reading of the *Odyssey* in three libraries: in Nysa, Rome, and Jerusalem.⁶⁹

Archaeological expeditions in the Near East enabled Africanus to fashion for himself a reputation as a knowledgeable and objective native informant. The selection and description of sites that he recalls visiting in his chronicle show that he was writing for more than a Christian readership. All had

international cachet. One of them was the location of the ark. Several nations competed for possession of its remains. Tourists in Armenia took home souvenirs from the ark for use as amulets.⁷⁰ In Adiabene, relics from the ark were shown, Josephus writes, to “those curious to see them” (*Ant.* 20.25–26). Africanus settled the controversy about its location once and for all, through autopsy. There are some, he writes, who say that Mount Ararat was located in Celaenae in Phrygia; “we know, however, [that] its real location is in Parthia; for I have seen either place.”⁷¹ Africanus had mastered the rules about writing for tourists: above all, stress the extraordinary. In his account of the topography of the region of the Dead Sea, probably the best-known natural wonder in Palestine, Africanus, while native to the region, strikes the pose of the awestruck tourist, witnessing the site for the first time: “In this sea, I have witnessed a great many marvelous things,” he writes.⁷²

By Africanus’s time, the terebinth tree at Mamre, at the foot of which Abraham built an altar to God and where he entertained the three angels who later visited Sodom (Gen 13.18; 18.1–16), was soaked in legend. A tradition already known to Josephus (*War* 4.534), claiming that the tree was as old as the world, contributed further to its mystique. It was also the cult object of a regional yearly fair and festival, attended by worshipers of all backgrounds—Christians, Jews, and others (Sozomen, *HE* 2.4).⁷³ Not everyone was pleased by its ecumenical appeal, however. A Jewish tradition known to Jerome held that at the site of this “very famous fair (*mercatus celeberrimus*),” the emperor Hadrian had sold “many thousands of Jews” into slavery and transported the rest to Egypt.⁷⁴ In a rabbinic passage from the Jerusalem Talmud (y’AZ 1.4, 39d), R. Yoḥanan is said to have prohibited Jews from participating in the festival, “the most debased” of all fairs. When the emperor Constantine learned about the festival from his mother-in-law, Eutropia, he tried, unsuccessfully, to purge the site of the pagan rites being performed there (Eusebius, *VC* 3.51–53).⁷⁵ None of these practices appears to have troubled Africanus. To the contrary, sacrifices offered at the altar in front of the tree validate its fabulous properties. The neighboring population (*hoi plēsiochōroi*), he writes, would gather at the site to honor their forefathers, where they would offer up “burnt offerings and hecatombs” at the base of the tree.⁷⁶ But even when enveloped by the flames rising up from the animals burning on the altar, Africanus writes, the terebinth managed to survive intact. His concluding report about the supernatural origins of the tree is a familiar device in paradoxography: report a fabulous story, but, to maintain a semblance of objectivity, distance yourself from it. “Some people claim (*phasi de tines*),” he writes, that the terebinth

sprouted up on the place where one of the angels entertained by Abraham planted his rod.⁷⁷

Recollections of meetings with local luminaries make Africanus out to be a social climber and celebrity agent. In his chronicle, he recalls journeying to Egypt to meet with Heraclas, the Christian philosopher of Alexandria. At the time of Africanus's visit (pre-221 CE), Heraclas had not yet risen to prominence as bishop of Alexandria and leader of the catechetical school. Africanus helped his career along. In his chronicle, he says that Heraclas's "great fame" was the reason that he traveled to Egypt to meet him.⁷⁸ Jesus' own relatives also benefited from his sponsorship. Outside Africanus, the only other description we have of their social standing survives in a story in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* about two surviving relatives of Jesus arraigned before the emperor Domitian. Their hands, callused by years of hard agricultural labor, satisfied Domitian, Eusebius writes, that these men were "simple folk," no threat to Rome, and deserving little more than contempt (*HE* 3.20.5). Africanus's own impression of Jesus' relatives was far different. He treats them as eastern royalty. They had in their possession, he writes, proof of their "noble ancestry (*tēs eugeneias*)," which they preserved either by memory or in privately maintained archives. And he confers upon them an impressive title, the *desposynoi*, an obscure word meaning something like "those related to the Master."⁷⁹

Africanus's culminating act of self-interested advocacy was his leadership of an embassy to Rome on behalf of the town of Emmaus in 221, the last year of Elagabalus's reign.⁸⁰ At the time of the embassy, Emmaus, a Palestinian village northwest of Jerusalem, had one thing going for it: according to the Gospel of Luke, Jesus traveled there after his resurrection and appearance to two disciples (Luke 24.13–35).⁸¹ Africanus's good offices put this little *komē* (Luke 24.13, 18) on the map. Refounded as a polis and renamed Nicopolis, Emmaus soon became, in Eusebius's words, a "famous city (*epiēmōs polis*)."⁸² It even had its own tourist attraction: a healing fountain on the outskirts of the city, where, according to local tradition, the postresurrection Jesus and the disciples traveling with him had dipped their feet.⁸³

The Emmaus embassy also launched Africanus's career in Rome. After Elagabalus's death, he remained there, earning the patronage of his successor Alexander Severus. Improvement in church-state relations ushered in by his reign no doubt had something to do with his success. Eusebius recalls that while staying in Antioch, the emperor's mother—in his words, "a most religious woman if ever there was one"—received instruction from Origen in theology (*HE* 6.21.3–4).⁸⁴ But Africanus's relations with the emperor were

very different from Origen's. His actions on behalf of the emperor were those not of a representative of the church but of a private person with a specialized skill to offer. In his *Cesti*, he claims to have "designed (*ērchitektonēsa*)" for the emperor what he calls the beautiful library of the Pantheon, near the baths of Alexander.⁸⁵ As he had done previously with Abgar, Africanus leveraged his knowledge and familiarity with books and archives to gain imperial favor.⁸⁶

Africanus's final great literary work, the *Cesti*, was also dedicated to the emperor (Syncellus 439.18–20). The Severan age was notable for its works of encyclopedic and synthetic learning.⁸⁷ Although the *Cesti*, whimsically named after Aphrodite's magical girdle, survives only fragmentarily, it must have been a tour de force. Without knowing more about the author, the reader of the *Cesti* would have no clue that its author was a Christian. Homer, not the Bible, is the *Cesti's* canonical text. In twenty-four volumes, Africanus represents himself as the master of everything: medicine, *hippiatrica*, viticulture, metrology, tactics, dyes, literary criticism, rhetoric, and a host of techniques under the catchall rubric of "secret knowledge": among them, amulets, chemical and biological warfare, and various arts of deception.⁸⁸

Despite its content, the *Cesti* is far from a work of dry technical prose. An extreme example of the rhetorical excesses of the Second Sophistic, it is a work of astonishing bravado and showmanship.⁸⁹ Africanus gloats over the misery of an enemy soldier swollen beyond recognition by his secret toxins.⁹⁰ A parasite at a banquet put to sleep by one of his secret potions is a source of merriment for him.⁹¹ He flaunts his learning with the condescension of the know-it-all. To assist soldiers in aiming a catapult, he sets forth a series of Euclidean formulas meant to determine the height of a wall and the width of a river. Anyone with a "middling general education (*hoi tēs enkykliou metriōs epēboloi paideias*)," he writes, should have no trouble understanding them.⁹² Elsewhere, he presents himself as Dionysius redivivus, offering to humanity recipes for the making of wine without grapes.⁹³ To prove the efficacy of an amulet meant to keep the weary soldier from dozing off, he challenges Hypnos, the god of sleep, to a duel.⁹⁴ The eleventh-century Byzantine scholar Michael Psellus, an acerbic critic of the *Cesti*, dismissed the work as "pseudologia," the posturing of a preening sophist and self-styled master of the universe. Africanus "admires and astonishes himself, as if he has even moved the earth with his finger, and promises to reveal what is ineffable and unspeakable in it, and that it is able to make the one possessed of this knowledge into a hero or a god."⁹⁵ While his criticisms are a bit extreme, Psellus did grasp the guiding principle of the work. The *Cesti* is an extended hymn to the power of skill

and expertise, of *technē*. Nothing—not the gods, not fate, not chance, not nature—is a match for the nation or army in possession of it. And Africanus is its foremost exponent.

Later Christian commentators and modern scholars were mystified that a renowned Christian of the early third century could have written such a work. But there is little to be gained by framing the issue in this way. The better way to understand Africanus's public career in Rome is in the context not of his Christianity but rather of relations between Rome and Greek-speaking eastern elites in the second and third centuries CE. In exchange for advising and assisting emperors and interceding in Rome on behalf of eastern cities, Greek sophists, rhetors, and other literary men reaped substantial rewards, both personally and for the cities they represented.⁹⁶

Africanus, the Palestinian Christian, Edessene courtier, and master of everything, may be one of the best illustrations of the success of the policy. His patron Abgar the Great might have admired the ease with which Africanus re-created himself as a Roman. Like previous Severan emperors, Elagabalus and Severus Alexander pursued an aggressive policy of Roman colonization of the Near East.⁹⁷ Africanus embraces the policy without reservation. He is the only Christian writer before Eusebius to refer to Jerusalem, his “former patria (*archaia patris*)” by the Roman name conferred upon it after the Bar Kokhba revolt: Colonia Aelia Capitolina.⁹⁸ He heads a delegation to Rome leading to the refounding of Emmaus as a polis. And in his chronicle, completed (hardly coincidentally) around the same time as the embassy to Rome, he pays Rome a supreme honor by manufacturing for the empire an ancient royal eastern pedigree. Roman antiquarians before Africanus speculated at length as to whether the primitive inhabitants of Latium were really aboriginal or had migrated from elsewhere.⁹⁹ Africanus now makes a bold revisionist assertion about the origins of the earliest god-kings of Italy: they were migrants and colonists from the East and blood relatives of the legendary Assyrian rulers Ninus and Semiramis.¹⁰⁰ The underlying political message is clear: Roman colonization was not a western invasion at all but just a homecoming of a people with ancestral connections to one of the oldest and most venerable empires of the East.¹⁰¹

By the time he had completed the *Cesti*, Africanus had thrown in his lot with Rome. He advocates total warfare against Rome's enemies.¹⁰² While he continues to present himself as a native expert on the customs of eastern peoples, there is only one place in the work in which he identifies himself with a particular nation: in the first chapter of the seventh book of the *Cesti*.

Rome's inability to subdue the Persians, he writes, has made the nations of inner Asia overconfident of their freedom. It has also given them reason to boast that through the application of force, they have attained "equal standing with us (*tēn isotimian . . . pros ēmas*)."¹⁰³ The meaning of the word "us" is hardly in doubt. It is "us Romans."

The Cultured Christian Elite of Edessa

Edessa of Late Antiquity makes an ideal test case for the study of the stages in the Hellenization, Romanization, and Christianization of the Near East. Up until the time of its Roman colonization, Edessa was adept in assimilating cultural and religious influences that elsewhere sometimes erupted into conflict. While Abgar the Great and his Christian courtiers may not have shared the same religion, they had, as Epiphanius writes, a common *paideia*. These were an elite class, the *pepaideumenoι*, who were masters of everything: antiquarians, archers, artists, astronomers, bibliophiles, chroniclers, ethnographers, philologists, philologists, and, above all, arbiters and symbols of Edessene court culture.

That function spilled over into the religious realm. Bardaisan and Africanus wore their Christianity lightly, moving with evident ease in non-Christian society. It is difficult to classify either writer according to the traditional categories of "philosopher," "theologian," or "biblical commentator." Some of their works lacked any Christian content at all. No one reading the surviving excerpts from Africanus's *Cesti* or Bardaisan's ethnography of India would have any idea about the religious identity of their authors. For the same reason, "Christian" was not always the first thing observers and associates saw in them. For Africanus, his coreligionist Bardaisan was simply "the Parthian." In introducing Bardaisan's ethnography of India to his readers, Porphyry, the famous nemesis of the church, does not disclose the fact that Bardaisan was a Christian. Perhaps he was not even aware of it. As far as Porphyry was concerned, Bardaisan was a "Babylonian man," the emblematic eastern sage (*De abstinence*, 4.17.2).

Later Christian tradition understandably tended to reshape Abgar and his Christian courtiers into more recognizable categories. Over time, Abgar the Great came to look more like a Christian king. In elevating Abgar from "a holy man" (so Africanus) to a "most devout man (*andri hosiōtatō*)," Epiphanius helped cultivate the impression that his friendship with Bardaisan had a religious grounding.¹⁰⁴ A statement in the Syriac text of *The Book of the Laws of the*

Countries claiming that Abgar's prohibited ritual emasculation "when he had come to the faith (*hymn*)" was probably a later interpolation (*BLC* 58.22).¹⁰⁵ Abgar's Christian courtiers underwent the same process of "Christianization." Ultimately, the one thing most remembered about Bardaisan was that he was a Christian heretic in the class of Mani, Marcion, and Valentinus. While Africanus escaped the charge of heresy, later generations were unsettled by some of his writings. Rufinus and Jerome quietly dropped the problematic *Cesti* from their inventory of Africanus's writings.¹⁰⁶ Troubled by the *Cesti's* embrace of "the Hellenic error" and of wisdom "alien to the faith of Christians," a scholastic on Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* concluded that Eusebius must have been mistaken in ascribing the *Cesti* to the same pious Christian who, in his *Epistle to Aristides*, tried to reconcile disagreements between the genealogies of Jesus in the gospels.¹⁰⁷ One could also improve his image by elevating his standing in the church. A tradition preserved in the Syriac chronicles confers upon him the office of bishop of Emmaus, thus implying that when he led the Emmaus delegation in Rome, he did so as a representative of the church.¹⁰⁸ Regrettably, modern commentators have only accelerated the process of reducing Africanus to an artificially defined "Christian" identity.¹⁰⁹

But these measures did not entirely efface the other dimensions of Abgar's Christian courtiers. Christian writers continued to acknowledge that there was more to Africanus and Bardaisan than their Christianity. Honored as a "polymath of the highest order" (*polumathestatos*), a "philosopher," and a "professor of medicine" (*iatrosophistēs*), Africanus appears alongside other towering, even mythical, figures of ancient secret wisdom, among them Democritus, Apollonius of Tyana, Agathodaimon, and Hermes.¹¹⁰ Eusebius was obviously proud that the church of the third century had produced men of such wide-ranging talents. Africanus, he writes, was "an erudite man (*anēr logios*) and well-known to those with a grounding in secular *paideia* (*tēs exōthen paideias*)" (*Quaestiones ad Stephanum suppl.*, PG 22.965A). In his *Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius was reluctant to write Bardaisan off as a heretic. Although Bardaisan never fully shed the vestiges of Valentinianism, he writes, his skills in debate made him an effective instrument against heresy (*HE* 4.30). But a different Bardaisan steps forward in his *Praeparatio Evangelica*. In his proofs against fate and astral determinism, Eusebius classifies *The Book of the Laws of Countries* as a non-Christian work (*ta men apo tōn exōthen*), composed "by a highly trained Chaldean scientist of Syrian birth" (Eusebius, *PE* 6.9.32; 6.10.49). When it suited his broader purposes, even Eusebius could make allowance for Bardaisan's multiple identities.

CHAPTER 3

Law and Imperial Idioms: Rabbinic Legalism in a Roman World

NATALIE B. DOHRMANN

The words of the *shema*^ε should not be in your eyes like some anti-quated edict to which no one pays any attention but like a new edict that everyone runs to read.

—SifreDeut §33

The centrality of the law to antique and rabbinic Judaism is a commonplace so pervasive as to seem hardly worth mentioning. Many scholars presume that the halakhic edifice of rabbinic literature grows in some measure from the seeds of Second Temple legal precedent—and in substantial content areas, we know this to be true. Others emphasize rabbinic legal innovation.¹ But what do we mean when we speak of Jewish law? Does this mean some set or sets of laws? The specific practices of a given community or the collected practices of several? Biblical law? Hermeneutics? Composition? The function of this chapter is to interrogate the category of law in a particular historical landscape; but in so doing, I want to shift the frame from practice and halakhic detail to one of religious discourse. Why do the rabbis think, and speak, a legal argot? The dominance of halakhah in rabbinic literature and culture has prompted the question: Was halakhah always the central category through which Jewish religious expression was mediated, and, if not, when and how did halakhah become the dominant genre and language of Judaism? This essay will argue that only under the rabbis does legal discourse come to dominate their Jewish

discourse and that rabbinic legalism is not an inevitable evolution. I will suggest—somewhat counterintuitively—that rabbinic literature represents a break from Jewish precedent precisely in its legality and that this in turn may tell us something about Romanization.

The rabbis emerged on the historical scene in the centuries following the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple by the Romans in the first century CE. My interest is in the massive literary output of the rabbis generated in the third and early fourth centuries in Palestine. The rabbinic Jewish elites were Roman subjects, and many were citizens. Even though the rabbis had no official jurisdiction under Rome in the third and fourth centuries,² the extant tannaitic corpus is overwhelmingly legal: it is composed by legal experts and celebrates legal expertise. Beyond obedience, the study and mastery of law were, for the rabbis, the modes of knowledge and worship most highly valued not only among their colleagues but, from their perspective, by God. But since rabbinic law lacks the authority to coerce, it is difficult to read its predominance.

First, I would like to denaturalize halakhah as an indigenous language of Jewish religiosity. To do this, it is vital to note that the particular legalism we tend to ascribe to Judaism as a whole actually emerges somewhat late, and in marked contrast to an earlier cultural context that did not privilege legal expression. (I want to be clear to distinguish law as a set of practices from my focus, which is the specific legalism of rabbinic discourse.) Second, I will suggest a range of approaches as to why rabbinic legality emerges when it does (that is, in major works dating from the third century),³ with the aim of collating aspects of this era that may have provided the fertile context for this evolution in Jewish thought and expression.

Methodologically, I hope to have found a way to compare rabbinic and Roman law as broad cultural systems while sidestepping the often frustratingly complex genealogies of legal specifics.⁴ Additionally, my approach temporarily brackets questions of the law's political and polemical content; whether the rabbis and their laws are pro- or anti-Roman is not my main concern. However, that the rabbis have chosen to make central a mode of self-presentation that is also that of the dominant power, while perhaps entirely expected, is strikingly revealing.

Rabbis and Their Precursors

The question of the origins of rabbinic legalism *qua legalism* has hardly been broached in the scholarship on Jewish law except in pejorative or polemical contexts, mostly because Judaism has long been presumed to be always already legalistic.⁵ This presumption grows in part from a long history of Christian attempts to reduce Judaism to mere legalism, in contrast with Christian “spirit.”⁶ The presumption of a certain innate Jewish legalism emerges as well from the fact that rabbinic Judaism eventually becomes normative Judaism, indelibly tracing its own legal self-definition into pre-rabbinic tradition.⁷

Despite rabbinic jurisdictional impotence, rabbinic literature makes extremely broad claims for its own *nomos*, “presuming full authority over [all] Jews.”⁸ Palestinian rabbinic literature is marked by legality nearly everywhere, both in form and content. It describes a religious leader difficult to distinguish from a legal expert, and a religious terrain defined both broadly and intricately by legal categories. God is depicted in amoraic sources not merely as sovereign and lawgiver but also as a student of his own laws, to which he is subject. Other types of Jewish holy men familiar from Second Temple sources largely fade from prominence in the rabbinic landscape.⁹ This is not necessarily surprising, given that the rabbis are most likely what Seth Schwartz calls “the scribal and judicial sub-elite of first-century Judaea” who were working hard to establish their own institutional authority in the aftermath of two failed Jewish revolts against Rome.¹⁰ What is surprising about their legal-literary cosmos is just how innovative it is, even for Second Temple judicial sub-elites and their congeners. Before the Roman era, Jewish literature did not look anything like rabbinic literature, and this disjunction—especially coupled with the retraction of earlier Jewish discursive genres (see below) and the lack of authority of the rabbis’ laws—is a phenomenon worth exploring.

While nonlegal (or aggadic) material is obviously abundant in the tannaitic corpus, it carries a secondary status, not only in the eyes of the rabbis, who explicitly prioritize halakhah, but also encoded in formal terms.¹¹ Early midrash, as I have shown elsewhere,¹² applies the exegetical tools and presumptions of halakhah even when expounding narrative and other non-legal scriptural passages. The result is a literary product, aggadah, that, while conceptually rich, structurally telegraphs its subordinate place in the *paideic* hierarchy. Aggadot may be beloved and popular (not necessarily a plus for the early rabbis) and indeed, seem to come into maturity in the amoraic period, as

the rabbis are reaching out to those not part of their movement;¹³ but they are to be learned in the hot afternoon hours, or when one is ill—when one lacks the intellectual strength for halakhah. In other words, nonlegal topics are not wholly marginalized in tannaitic midrash. However, the explication of nonlegal topics, especially in lemmatic midrashim, does not develop its own fully discrete set of rules and terms. Aggadah remains, conceptually and methodologically, handmaiden to the halakhic project. Legal means and methods are the umbrella under which aggadic exegesis is subsumed and subordinated.¹⁴

Genres

For its size, the tannaitic corpus is surprisingly limited in its tonal range. Mishnah and midrash represent predominant genres, and though the rabbis seem to label other semi-generic and curricular subcategories, the corpus is remarkable for its paucity of generic variety. While we know that the rabbinic movement was diffuse, what is handed down as its treasured produce is, in literary terms, rather uniform—made up of the concentrated, code-like and multivocalic Mishnah or the highly concentrated lemmatic progression of exegetically driven interpretation, be they of scriptural or mishnaic law (itself similarly dense and staccato).¹⁵ The rabbis have left no histories, letters, chronicles, philosophy, or poetry, but most striking, no sustained narrative forms of any kind.¹⁶ That scraps, echoes, and allusions from and to these genres and forms persist and are preserved in rabbinic material is obvious but constitutes no argument for their independent survival as viable rabbinic genres. No one would confuse the Mekhilta or even Genesis Rabbah for narrative—indeed, one searches hard to find a story that extends over more than a few lines.

This generic boundedness is thrown into relief when the rabbinic corpus is set beside the vast literary arsenals not only of the pagan world but of emerging Christianity. Christian authors in the same period produced a wide variety of literary forms: dialogues, martyrologies, polemics, homilies, exegeses, histories, speeches, chronicles, epistles, and monographs.¹⁷ A proliferation of literary genres can be found in pagan literature as well, of course, including that of emerging provincial voices, such as those of the Second Sophistic, covering roughly the same time span as the tannaim. But equally important to its separation from concurrent or antecedent literary cultures of non-Jews is that the focused legalism of rabbinic production also stands in contrast to its own historical antecedents. Judaism was not always so literarily single-minded.¹⁸

The centuries preceding the emergence of the rabbis—that is, the Second

Temple period—preserve a profusion of literary forms emanating from Jewish pens in Judaea and the Diaspora.¹⁹ Second Temple literature is marked by a variety of fully realized literary genres. First among them is the polygeneric Torah itself. The artful combination of genres finds other exemplars as well, from the Enochic corpus to Jubilees. Further examples of generic diversity include the long narrative histories of Josephus, the ornate apocalyptic cosmoses such as that described in 1 Enoch, novels such as the Tobiad Romance or 3 Maccabees, philosophical essays of Philo, parodies, oracular texts, psalms, polemics, *pesharim*, creative histories (Artapanus), narratives echoing biblical stories (Jubilees), and testamentary and wisdom literature, just to get started. But despite the formal range listed here, Second Temple Jewish literature preserves nothing that resembles the sustained conceptual legalism of the rabbinic corpus. Even writings with serious legal content, as in parts of the Dead Sea Scrolls, are significantly different from rabbinic literature²⁰ and, in any case, constitute only a tiny portion of that literary landscape. Yet, by the time of the earliest rabbinic texts, other Jewish genres mostly vanish, and a literary-legal idiom (*halakhah*) predominates.

It is important to acknowledge the difficulties posed by preservation. The rabbis are merely one among many Jewish groups in the Roman East. Their origins among the scribal judicial classes, as well as their self-perpetuating stewardship of legal expertise, might naturally lead one to expect that their literary remains should have been largely legal. Indeed, other rabbinic literatures may have existed and were not preserved, either by later rabbis for whom they were problematic for some reason, or by Christians, for whom they were irrelevant in ways that “intertestamental” literature was not. In other words, despite its abundance, we must still account for the narrow parameters of the evidence.

So while the tannaitic corpus may not be seen as typical of Judaism or Jewish thought in the Roman world, it is nonetheless a significant example of Roman Judaism in the imperial period and, as such, has much to teach us. Despite the manifest cultural disengagement from Rome evidenced by rabbinic literary production (the Romans themselves are sparsely represented as such—Roman laws only lightly absorbed), we should not take this as proof of cultural isolation. Rabbis as a group were urban, highly educated, and relatively wealthy participants in the world of the Roman East—and, presumably, citizens—after 212 CE.

Rabbinic Legality and Torah Theology

To suggest that rabbinic legalism is new is not to say that the law itself is new or that Jews did not follow religious law before the rabbinic era. Sinai, Torah, and covenant constitute the core symbolic elements of nearly all ancient Jewish theology—the centrality of these concepts in Second Temple texts might suggest that legalism is also dominant in Jewish theology and thought prior to the rabbis. Although these biblical concepts explain why an idea of law is central to rabbinic religiosity, they do not account for the particular manifestation of rabbinic legalism.²¹ The wide and flexible ways that covenant, commandment, and Torah have been deployed and depicted by ancient Jews make visible the innovation in rabbinic foregrounding of law and legal expertise. In short: Torah theology and rabbinic legality are distinct phenomena.

It might be argued that the Pentateuch is as law-focused as any pre-rabbinic Jewish text. Still, there is nothing inevitable to a legal exegesis of Torah. The diversity of literatures that rely deeply on Scripture testify to the fact that law is not a necessary postbiblical idiom.²² Christian exegesis manages to marginalize the legal, as do most Jewish, pre-rabbinic parabiblical texts, (though without Christianity's often pointedly anti-legal ideological valence). The rabbis, by contrast, translate Torah into Halakhah; they look to the Bible and write the Mishnah and the Sifra but not the *Testament of Levi* or *On the Migration of Abraham*.

Pre-rabbinic Jewish literature, then, is characterized by a strong legal theme, but this does not make it legal literature. First, what we might term “law” in these texts are usually descriptions of Jewish religious practice or serves to mark a general pious Torah-centrism. Second, when laws do appear in Second Temple literature, they tend to function as symbolic markers of Jewish identity. Time and again, one finds a sprawling biblical law reduced to a short list of (imperially unobjectionable) personal behaviors. The norms or practices that most often appear concern idolatry, dietary proscriptions, Sabbath observance, and circumcision, and sometimes purity and calendration. Where mentioned, these “laws” serve a larger religious narrative, marking Jews as Jews, either in a Hellenistic world or, in the case of calendar and purity, marking some Jews as real Jews, in contradistinction to other Jews. These practices and divine demands reflect a theology of covenant that is central to a discourse of identity. As they appear in this literature, laws do not and could not regulate Jewish life. Criminal law, property law, laws without

Jewish jurisdiction, and laws concerning defunct institutions are either absent or allegorized.

Before the rabbis, we do not find Judaism (Torah) expressed predominantly as law *per se*. I will cite two examples of things that we intuitively—but, I think, inaccurately—call “halakhic” in pre-rabbinic Judaism. First, in the second-century BCE book of Daniel, the central character’s intense commitment to his faith is glossed as his adherence to covenant—he avoids Babylonian meat (keeps kosher?), shuns idolatry, and prays three times a day—all while serving in the court of an idolatrous king. A strict reader of the Torah can hardly see in this collection of practices—no matter how fervently kept—adherence to the laws revealed at Sinai; yet this is precisely how it is presented (and, in its way, what it is). Daniel refuses to defile himself with King Nebuchadnezzar’s royal rations of food and wine, preferring instead vegetables and water (Dan 1.5–19). Against the odds, Daniel thrives on his impoverished diet, shedding glory on his own ascetic righteousness and on the God of Israel. While law drives the plot, this is clearly not a legal text. Instead, the practices in question talk about Jewish identity and theologize cultural negotiation and assimilation. This example is fairly typical of the treatment of law in pre-rabbinic sources.

In the second example, in 2 Maccabees 7, seven brothers are martyred for their refusal to eat pork, choosing to die, it reads, “rather than transgress the laws of our ancestors.” Again, the language of law and covenant infuses the passage, but the law itself is subordinate to a story of faith and martyrdom, assimilation, and resistance. Compare these few lines from the Mishnah, chosen at random from a vast collection on the same theme of dietary prohibitions: “He who eats an olive’s bulk of the sinew of the hip incurs forty lashes [stripes]. [If] he ate it and it does not contain an olive’s bulk, he is [nonetheless] liable. If he ate an olive’s bulk of this sinew and an olive’s bulk of that sinew, he incurs eighty lashes. R. Judah says, ‘He incurs only forty lashes.’ A thigh with which the sinew of the hip [was not removed] was cooked, if the sinew was enough to impart a flavor, lo this is prohibited” (mHul 7.3–4).²³ It goes on. There is no narrative setting. Having read this passage and the other in their respective contexts, the vast difference between the place, function, and discourse of law in these documents is manifest. In the Daniel and 2 Maccabees, law, vaguely sketched, serves the plot. In the Mishnah, law effaces the plot.²⁴ Even laws that were presumably widely obeyed or that were highly symbolic, and thus likely well articulated legally (somewhere by someone)—such as purity, Sabbath, or dietary laws—do not merit detailed explication in pre-rabbinic

Jewish literature. Presumably, they remained the province of priests and other legal technicians or were passed down orally in local lore, education, and custom; they seem not to have been deemed the stuff of widely circulated and preserved religious writing.

Some Second Temple narratives do, of course, show clear evidence of a legal complexity, beyond what we find in Daniel. Jubilees offers a prime example, preserving extensive evidence of mature legal traditions, albeit housed in a dominating narrative structure: the narrative discourse of Jubilees is the medium in which halakhic priorities are communicated. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls, we find codes of law preserved in some detail. However, as legal discourse, the scrolls differ in important ways from rabbinic literature. For instance, the codes or manuals concerning specific sectarian constituencies (Damascus Document [CD] and the Community Rule [1QS]) cover enforceable guidelines for a closed community, whereas the rabbis rhetorically imagine jurisdiction over Jews everywhere. In addition, in the relevant Qumran documents, the rules themselves are not the object of concern of the texts that present them; in Qumran legal texts, laws and their meanings are largely settled, and false application is ascribed to an external “they.” This is distinct from the scholastic interiority of the rabbinic corpus. In the Mishnah, nearly no topic is unambiguously adjudicated or asserted, and debates pertain almost entirely to a presumed *nomic* “we.” Furthermore, the sectarians’ close and polemical proximity to the Temple cult, along with the priestly origin of its authors, makes its concerns with purity and sacrificial material (both also of central concern for the Mishnah) different in legal aspect from rabbinic sacrificial laws for whom no Temple existed. For one, we can presume that the Temple was the locus of the development and transmission of much of what we might call the halakhah from the pre-rabbinic era. That there is no preserved record of it may well mean that it was passed on orally. Additionally, other texts with strong legal cores such as the Messianic Rule (1QSa), Halakhic letter (4QMMT), and War Scroll (1QM) are arguably “pragmatic”; the sanctioned jurisdiction and enforcement of these laws were understood to be not theoretical but currently enforceable, or imminently so.²⁵ The sectarian library notably preserves a wide variety of literary genres, several at least of the sectarians’ own production. All these show us a model of a highly *nomicized* community and, in so doing, highlight the unique single-mindedness of rabbinic legality.²⁶

Another text to profitably compare is the second-century BCE Letter of Aristeas. In this diasporic document, law and legal experts are given prominent

play in the narrative account of the translation of the Torah into Greek. But, as with other Second Temple literature, the law is thematized and allegorized. Moreover, the Torah experts are denaturalized and translated into ersatz Hellenistic philosophers.

Two other major sources of legal writing in Greek emerge from the pens of Philo and Josephus. Philosopher Philo and historian and apologist Josephus are each repositories of legal traditions in their respective explications of the biblical text. These sources confirm that law was a developed area of Jewish thought in certain segments in the pre-rabbinic period, in the Diaspora as well as the Land. Their (at times, minute) attention to legal detail may seem familiar to a reader of the rabbinic materials, and each remains a rich source for legal historians. However, neither sets legality at the center of his project, nor does either believe that the grander project—communicating what is Jewish or, perhaps more accurately, what is Israel and Torah—means speaking the law. In their distinct ways, what these two authors present is a narrativization of the law, not the legalization of the narrative.

What, by contrast, made up the rabbinic library? In the vast rabbinic corpus, we find a notion of halakhah in its broadest sense, before which other modes of religious worship, literary genres, forms of leadership, and religious knowledge and expression all recede. Not content to restrict itself to pragmatic or symbolic realms, rabbinic law expends great effort explicating vast realms of law that are nonfunctional in the Roman period. For the rabbis, Judaism is best expressed in legal venues, with legal language, by legal experts, following legal hermeneutics and legal logics. With them, for the first time, law becomes the primary language with which to communicate Torah.

The Deified Lawgiver

We are left with a question: If antecedent Jewish literature does not anticipate or necessitate the emergence of rabbinic legalism, what accounts for it? By way of prolegomenon to future study, I will suggest some ways and logics by which rabbinic legalism may have emerged, with special attention to the context of the increasing visible and assertive Roman legal presence in the East.²⁷ Given the deep interpenetration of Rome into the physical,²⁸ legal, and political²⁹ landscape of Palestine, it is natural to ask what modalities and dynamics of interaction emerged from that contact. Indeed, this question animates many of the studies in this volume. The types of interaction must range from conflict

to embrace, from the explicitly marked to the tacit and structural. A full range of possibilities lies between these poles. I will focus on law as a multifaceted Roman-Jewish contact zone.

Why think that the rabbis would mirror the cultural forms of an often brutal and corrupt oppressor?³⁰ Many factors stand in the way of this suggestion. The figure of the emperor, for example, was expressed through a proliferation of plastic images regarded as idolatrous by rabbis—the deified emperor cult, so easily embraced by Judaea’s Hellenistic neighbors, all the more so.³¹ Roman rhetorics of consensus and common history were also difficult to sell to Jews raised on a religious diet of difference.³² Combined with a general rabbinic resistance to pagan culture, this means that the rabbis have long appeared to exempt themselves from standard narratives of Romanization.³³ Yet new histories written in recent years emphasize just how diverse, dialogical, and local Romanization was, and they encourage us to ponder the terms of rabbinic accommodation and participation as Roman provincials.

It is important as well to state the obvious: rabbis were Romans. In the third and fourth centuries, all “Jews took part in the Roman experience (*romanitas*) that pervaded the Mediterranean at one level or another, and did not necessarily see this as something that contradicted their Judaism.”³⁴ Rabbis lived in the empire and were evidently good Roman subjects: they paid their taxes, kept to themselves, and were conscious beneficiaries of the *Pax Romana*.³⁵ Some aspects of this Roman world were marked as imperial, foreign, pagan, and Roman; many others were not—they were simply the stuff of life as lived.³⁶

Beyond discussing rabbinic strategies for living a Jewish life in a pagan environment (of isolation, neutralization, accommodation, or resistance),³⁷ I would like to ask what in and of Rome might condition these strategies themselves. I will discuss three interrelated aspects of the Roman scene that seem particularly relevant to the emergence of rabbinic legal culture, focusing on the interplay of Roman law in particular with Romanization more broadly. (Rome was a complex imperial presence, and my emphasis on law is not meant to preclude the impact of other Roman modes of encounter and rule.) Last, I will suggest an approach to rabbinic legalism in the context of the picture painted by the first three.

First, the nature of Roman imperial success: with a vast empire and tiny administration—Clifford Ando estimates that in the first two centuries, Rome relied on “160 elite officials to govern its 55 million subjects”³⁸—Rome ruled with something significantly more powerful than military might: “[P]rovincial

obedience to Roman domination was an ideological construct, its realization dependent on many people's sharing a complex of beliefs that sanctioned a *peculiarly Roman notion of social order*." Yet, Ando stresses, "particular constituencies responded to those principles they were predisposed to accept."³⁹ Local populations could shape their legitimating narrative in their own terms, which were "native" and still somehow Roman.⁴⁰ This is how Rome wanted it.⁴¹ In his study of Roman Gaul, Greg Woolf describes Romanization at its most intense, when it no longer uses Roman categories but when Roman ways of thought are nativized—when Rome, that is, becomes transparent. For example, a deified emperor was to make little traction with rabbinic monotheists. But that same emperor, when cast as a charismatic, all-powerful lawgiver, dispensing a universalizing and supremely powerful law aimed at protecting the disenfranchised, could be easily comprehended, translated, and internalized, within indigenous Jewish/Torah categories.⁴²

Second, law was a dominant element of the Jewish experience of the empire.⁴³ Jurisdiction and central imperial control were increasingly pervasive in the principate. As Michael Peachin notes, "wherever the Romans went, law and its public arena, the court, invaded time and again the existence of nearly everyone."⁴⁴ Provincial governors took regular circuits, drawing throngs to its court.⁴⁵ For legally minded rabbis, consciousness of this presence would have been heightened. Roman laws were widely published in the eastern provinces, disseminated, and archived at an astonishing rate.⁴⁶ The rabbis, like other provincials, knew well the processes and performances of Roman law, from edict to court to archive.⁴⁷

Rabbis, while not directly or consistently linked to the court as power brokers or judges, styled themselves as legal experts. An associated arena where one might look for sub-elites who resemble rabbis, Catherine Hezser points out, is the world of the more scholastic Roman jurist.⁴⁸ Part of the increasing centralization and imperial control over imperial law, beginning in the second century under Hadrian, was the change in status of the jurist—from "an aristocratic amateur, whose expertise in law was a kind of hobby coexisting with more important career obligations" to up-and-comers in the imperial hierarchy in their own right.⁴⁹ Roman jurists became increasingly powerful in this era, and legal knowledge was recognized as a valuable cultural commodity, indispensable for the successful navigation of the legal system. Further, legal culture and expertise were professionally and imperially advantageous. It was an avenue to professional advancement—especially for less well connected provincials—but was also a way to gain access to the highest circles. "A few

favoured jurists,” Harries notes, were even granted “the right to give opinions (*ius respondendi*) which carried with them the emperor’s *auctoritas*.”⁵⁰ Or, as she writes elsewhere, “juristic expertise reinforces political eminence.”⁵¹ While knowledge of the intricacies of halakhah was not going to give rabbis access to Roman imperial circles, the sort of knowledge/power configuration that the rabbis modeled echoed a recognized and valued cultural type.

Not unrelated to the jurist parallel in the Roman East is that of the Greek rhetor. The status accrued by rhetorical training and legal expertise underscores the importance of law in the political life of intellectual sub-elites.⁵² The sophists of the Second Sophistic are recognized as doing the work of imperial translation, celebration, manipulation, and defiance; the movement—if one can call it that—promises a fruitful, if still-understudied parallel for the rabbinic provincial culture of the rabbis.⁵³ As with juristic knowledge, rhetorical expertise offered a potential ticket to wealth and advancement into imperial hierarchies—we know of many ethnically local Greeks who rose to prominence by way of their learning and displays of forensic virtuosity.⁵⁴ The legal element that was the meat and potatoes of rhetorical livelihood was a mediating ground in which to assert a Greek ideal and yet work the Roman system to advantage.

This modeling of a meritocratic cultural dualism would have been on display in the rabbis’ world.⁵⁵ While rhetorical training exercises have been shown to have parallels to rabbinic training,⁵⁶ rabbis were not popular performers, their work is not eloquent, nor is it meant to rouse the emotions of their audience. Still, rhetorical education had a powerful, if less flashy or prestigious, forensic component that makes it a compelling element of the legal Jewish-Roman contact zone. It also invites us to set rabbinical legalism on a continuum with other provincial strategies operating in the legal sphere or developing legal argots—as an instructive exemplar of the complex processes of Romanization.

Third is the extent to which Roman law functioned as political propaganda. In addition to the fact of Roman legal ubiquity was the idea of Roman law as part of the propaganda machinery of empire. The Roman emperors depicted themselves as the neutral protector of the people and the enabler of the *Pax Romana* and its prosperity. A central tool in this peacemaking and peacekeeping was the law and the ideal of a justice served and presided over by the emperor. This is reflected in the propagated image of the emperor and his prefectorial proxies, as reflected in data as varied as provincial petitions and rescripts to the images on coins. Harries, Millar, and Peachin map the

expanding Roman legal reach, the adaptability of the legal machinery in the principate, and its implicit message. Hannah Cotton (in this volume) shows how complex and syncretistic local rulings signaled their ideal of authority, stability, and order by naming their laws *Nomos Hellēnikos* and *Ethos Rōmaikon*. Serena Connolly's work on the late third-century *Codex Hermogenianus* demonstrates how the Roman system of rescripts served in part to convey the imperial message that it would protect average citizens; proof of the success of the message of care is the extent to which the system was embraced by even relatively humble provincial petitioners.⁵⁷

Rome made its provincials aware that its law was ubiquitous and available to protect their interests.⁵⁸ Jews—rabbis not excepted—knew and participated in the Roman legal systems.⁵⁹ For rabbinic Jews, the Roman court stood not only as a palpable manifestation of Roman authority but was also a galling competitor, since the majority of Jews evidently found it attractive and effective.⁶⁰ That Jewish provincials used Roman legal institutions over more convenient local Jewish venues is evident from the sources. This is a testament to the impact not only of the pervasive Roman legal presence but to the effectiveness of imperial claims that the state possessed the intention and the power to be just and to protect the interests of its more disenfranchised provincials, even in cases of minor local disputes (whether they did so is another matter).⁶¹

Conclusion

In studies of the rabbinic period, scholarship has shifted in the last decade from highlighting Jewish legal autonomy to highlighting rabbinic irrelevance; problematically, both approaches allow one to see rabbinic culture as sheltered from or impervious to Rome. Yet Rome was a savvy imperialist, an expert communicator that elicited and relied on consensus and compliance. Given that it ruled an empire stretching from Persia to Britain with a standing administration smaller than the one used to run the University of Pennsylvania, Roman imperium relied on a provincial acquiescence that was more than superficial or simply adaptive. In addition to laws themselves, law in the abstract was central to the empire's ideal of itself—it was both the face and vocabulary of Roman power. Content aside, the very profusion of laws would have been a persuasive imperial language. Rome sold itself as an idealized *nomos*—and on top stood the emperor as the “ultimate creator and absolute guarantor of law and legality, of justice and equity.”⁶² This legal-performative effort was as

much a part of Roman propaganda and ideology as it was a part of imperial administration.⁶³ We can imagine an inescapable conflation, then, of legal ubiquity and imperial power.

What can we say about the understanding of Roman legal culture by Jews in general, and rabbis in particular? Roman law was as much friend as foe to Jews living in an often hostile cultural environment.⁶⁴ The Jewish situation, in particular, contributed to reliance on and manipulation of Roman claims of justice and access to justice, as Jews needed to protect themselves in their often precarious position in a largely Greek East.⁶⁵ The law was a voice of Roman power, brutality, and corruption; but the legal tribunal also seems to have kept the peace and held (and sometimes even delivered) a promise of protection.⁶⁶ Jews called on Rome to adjudicate in disputes with Greek neighbors, in fact and in fiction. If appeals to the Roman administration were necessary to the Jews and were historically and rhetorically exploited, Roman propaganda extolling the emperor's touted "accessible" justice may have found an especially receptive Jewish audience.⁶⁷ The accessibility of the Roman emperor in the legal workings of the empire, in theory and practice, is in this wise vital to Jewish experience, as is evidenced in the stories of the patriarch and the emperor. It may even inflect the essential rabbinic notion that legal expertise and virtuosity are the best way to secure access to their own god.

It is not accidental that the *nomicized* world projected by Rome shares key elements with the world idealized by the rabbis in their Torah. We have seen several arenas where what is a manifestly new theological legalism shares parallels with the Roman East from which it grew (and against which it is asserting itself). The idea of the deified emperor whose will is translated and mediated by jurist experts from his inner circle has obvious echoes in the rabbinic theological project. The rise of the jurist as a powerful new mode of authority and professional advancement finds resonance in the rabbis as Jewish sub-elite on the make, also looking for ways to rise in prominence and authority, and to increase access to the ultimate lawgiver.⁶⁸ The machinery of law and legal expertise so necessary to success in and under Rome seems to have been troped and mirrored by the rabbis. Roman legality was not only a discourse that made categorical and theological sense to the rabbis; but it in part created the categories with which sense was made at all.

The legal world created by the tannaim is largely unprecedented, and the rabbis, in committing to law, are—consciously or unconsciously—defining themselves and building their Judaism, on and through a matrix of elements collected from and filtered through the Roman world. From what other world

might they have built it? The influence of Hellenism on Second Temple Jewish literature material is clear to all, and the Christian influence in the emergence of the synagogue is manifest;⁶⁹ but somehow, the rabbis—in their macro-structure, in their legalism/halakhah—have managed to be seen as Jewish, indigenous, authentic, and essential.

The genealogies of Jewish laws are well studied; the fact of rabbinic legalism less so. That much of what we know of rabbinic law predates the rabbis is common knowledge. That this law is, in many areas, noncontinuous with the Roman law in the environs is similarly not debated. But why do the rabbis voice their Judaism as legalism, their religious knowledge as legal knowledge, in the ways that they do, and why now? Of Roman Greece, Tim Whitmarsh writes that “cultural identity as manifested in literature is inseparable from literary strategy. . . . [L]iterary representation . . . was a crucial aspect of competitive structure of elite society.”⁷⁰ The same is true of the rabbinic elite. What cultural identity does rabbinic literature express? Ornate rabbinic scholasticism and the use of Hebrew may be a hidden transcript vis-à-vis the Roman gaze, and rabbinic ideas of the social contract may reject Mediterranean norms.⁷¹ Yet the halakhic inclination is a purloined letter communicating a particular Roman inheritance—hidden in plain sight.

By embracing a distinctive legality as their central discursive paradigm, the rabbis assimilate an idiom of control and force, making Mount Sinai a model not only for national and divine autonomy but for imperial success (and success under empire as well) and the articulation of the pax that they dream of, the peace of covenant fulfilled. Woolf observes that “local variation, where it occurred, was restricted to areas of culture where it was licit in Roman terms”: even arenas of a distinctly “Jewish” innovation may have been given space by a Roman hegemonic culture—becoming visible when one is attentive to what he calls the “imperial patterning of cultural diversity.”⁷² This is exemplified in the efflorescence of law as the vocabulary of rabbinic Judaism in a time of rampant Roman legalization.

It is clear that rabbinic law is Jewish law—it shows little evidence of Roman legal forms or content, and much of it is defiantly anti-Roman, but this is not the point. The culture and scale of rabbinic legality seem to arise *de novo* from under the legally inflected aegis of the high empire. Woolf describes the dynamics of Romanization as occurring on the structural level—as “the creation of a society/ a complex of domination / a social configuration in which and by which power is organized in a Roman way.”⁷³ Rabbis are, to a certain extent, organizing and articulating their authority “in a Roman

way.” If Romanization was most successful when it no longer spoke in Roman categories and dichotomies but nativized Roman ways of thought, is it not possible that rabbinic law is the inheritance of an empire obsessed by a law imagined as indisputably powerful, universal, and unifying, flexible, and beneficent . . . with a deified, stern but clement and just lawgiver at its head? Could this be an invisible force influencing the rabbinic transformation of the Torah into the Talmud?

The Law of Moses and the Jews: Rabbis, Ethnic Marking, and Romanization

HAYIM LAPIN

Mishnah Tractate *Ketubot* 7.6 provides a list of practices that mark wives as transgressing what is generally rendered “the law of Moses and the Jews.”¹ The specified transgressions relate primarily to public comportment. Taking this rabbinic passage as a starting point, this essay works through a group of texts that intersect with or comment on it. Two texts in the Tosefta deploy a list of practices that overlaps verbally with that in the Mishnah, each to a different end. In those texts, lapses in women’s public comportment are explicitly sexualized, and one of the versions of the Tosefta lists makes clear that the practices afford the viewer (and the rabbinic student of the text) a grid for social judgment of women and men. In the Palestinian Talmud’s (early fifth-century or perhaps late fourth-century) discussion proximate to our Mishnah, the field of view for transgressive acts by women shifts from comportment in public to inner domestic spaces. At the same time, the Yerushalmi rhetorically creates a more totalizing Jewish world in which the explicit ethnic indexing of the Mishnah (acts that transgress the law or, as I prefer below, the rule of the Jews) has been left behind.

These texts, I argue, are moments in a continual rewriting of boundaries between ethnic self and other by Jews in Palestine between the second and fourth centuries CE, although they relate specifically only to rabbis, one sub-elite within that larger population. At issue in each case is the way that this group of provincials constituted Jews as a distinct ethnos and deployed comportment, sexual morality, and especially women as markers of ethnic

difference. Of particular interest is a seeming paradox: the social practices that will be at issue in ethnic marking are not in themselves ethnically distinctive. In fact, bathing in public baths, which will recur below, is a Roman practice adopted quite happily by rabbis, while discussion of women and comportment in the baths fits squarely into the cultural debates about gender comportment in the Roman Empire. Yet, as the headings in mKet 7.6 indicate, compliance with or transgression of these norms is given a particularist cast: they mark the woman in question as conforming to or transgressing boundaries that are specific to Jews. The texts thus point to the constitution or maintenance of ethnic boundaries by sectors of the population that are also highly integrated, to the cultivation of ethnic otherness by Roman provincials.

At the same time, the texts reflect rabbinic strategies to define and regulate these boundaries. The question of power—how rabbis get to define or police the borders—is inescapable here, although a full treatment is beyond the scope of this essay. In my historical reconstruction, rabbis were a numerically small and generally marginal movement of sub-elite provincial men, largely urban and propertied. The rhetorical and cultural work that the texts that we will examine below perform reflect one strategy for constituting rabbis as authorized ritual and tradition experts, men uniquely and specially positioned to define and police ethnic boundaries for their adherents. Particularly notable is the way in which a constellation of conventional practices—comportment in public baths, clauses in marriage documents—is recast as normative. In the texts discussed below, rabbinic texts provide their students with a kind of discernment: knowledge about how to judge women and their men. The measure of rabbinic power, on this reconstruction, is not whether people conformed to rabbinic standards but the extent to which a cadre of adherents learned and internalized this discernment and organized their own relationships and households accordingly, and perhaps ultimately perhaps shaped public discourse about women's comportment around the “normative” categories that rabbis articulated.

The “Law of Moses and the Jews”: mKet 7.6

The following [wives] go out without a *ketubah*: one who transgresses the rule (*dat*) of Moses and the Jews.²

Which is [a transgression of] the rule of Moses?

One who feeds him [food] that is not tithed, “serves” him while a

menstruant, does not separate *ḥalah* [the priestly dough offering], and vows and does not fulfill.

And which is [a transgression of] the rule of the Jews?

One who goes out with her head uncovered/unbound (*paru'a*), spins in the marketplace, and speaks with every man [or: "everyone"].

Abba Shaul says: "Even one who curses his offspring before him."

R. Tarfon says: "Even one who is loud."³ (mKet 7.6)

As the Mishnah and other rabbinic texts construe it, in a standard marriage the husband commits to hold in trust a marital settlement, the *ketubah*, which is due to the wife upon a divorce or the husband's death, and which her sons from the marriage inherit. This arrangement, which reproduces neither payment of the biblical *mohar* (paid to the father in Exod 22.15 as a form of bride price) nor the dowry that was conventional among Jews—as among others in the Roman East—was provided in rabbinic texts with a history that understood this delayed payment as an inhibitor to divorce.⁴

The present passage, by contrast, deals with exceptions: two lists of transgressions for which wives are divorced without the usual financial obligation. Given that in this chapter there are several situations that mandate that a husband divorce his wife—for a husband's vows that overly restrict the wife; or for deformities on the husband or the wife—it is possible that our text *requires* husbands to divorce and withhold the *ketubah* of wives who transgress these norms, but this interpretation is not required.⁵ *Dat*, usually rendered "law" but here translated "rule," may, like Greek *nomos* (see below), mean "law" or something looser like "custom" or "norm." The Mishnah is exploiting the slip-page between the two meanings, using language of transgression appropriate to law, but including matters of comportment that are not matters of law.

The distinction between the rule of Moses and that of the Jews appears to be that between practices that are biblical in origin and those that are based on standards of "Jewish" practice for women.⁶ The locution "rule of Moses and the Jews" appears to be a reference to the formula of proposal that appears in marriage documents: "Be my wife according to the law of Moses and the Jews," which is cited elsewhere in rabbinic literature and is attested in preserved marriage documents from the early second century discovered in the Judean Desert.⁷ This passage is one of a series of traditions in early rabbinic texts that interpret or apply, and is thus appropriate as a "normative," standard clause found even in non-rabbinic contracts.⁸

Within this complex of citation and appropriation, the normative marriage formulary is significant for the number of times that the Mishnah appropriates it and the far-reaching claims that it draws from it. Notably, the Mishnah gives a series of clauses that protect the interests of the wife or of her offspring from the marriage. These clauses are labeled “stipulations of the court” (*tena’e bet din*) that are taken to be in effect even when not written in the deed. These follow immediately a rule that fathers are not obligated to feed their minor children, attributed to Eleazar b. Azariah. This, too, is seemingly based on an exposition of the text of the marriage document (mKet 4.7–12).⁹

Marriage documents from the Judaean Desert help to ground the rabbinic use of a more broadly conventional marriage contract form in roughly contemporary practice. Some version of what the Mishnah calls “court stipulations” (operative, even if not written into the document) appears in six documents, three in Greek and three in Aramaic.¹⁰ The order and precise wording of the stipulations are variable so that, for instance, at least one preserved example seems to preclude the kind of conclusion drawn by Eleazar b. Azariah (that fathers are not obligated to feed minor children) from the form of the document in the Mishnah.¹¹ This has the additional implication that the exposition of Eleazar b. Azariah not only assumes a marriage document with specific contents but perhaps even chooses a particular order for the standard clauses.

In addition to the variability in the stipulations in the documents that conform to the type to which the Mishnah refers, two additional documents—*P.Yadin* I 18 and 37 (= *P.Hev.* 65)—make clear that there were further alternatives available to Jews. The requirement to maintain a wife as well as children—what Eleazar b. Azariah sought to restrict for daughters on the basis of one form of marriage document—is marked in these documents as “Greek *nomos*” (law or custom) and in one of the two as *tropos* (manner).¹² In the latter documents, the connection with the specification of the dowry suggests a model of marriage in which the receipt of the wife’s dowry and her maintenance in the marriage are conceptually closely linked. Because these documents use clauses that are quite similar, it seems that they, too, deploy documentary conventions.¹³

For present purposes, it is the social or political indexing—marriage according to the laws of Moses and the Jews; maintenance according Greek legal or conventional standards—that is most striking.¹⁴ These are not exclusive identity markers, separating loyal Jews from “Hellenizers.” Judah b. Eleazar Khthousion himself married Babatha “according to the law of Moses and the Jews” but in close chronological proximity married off (*exedoto*) his own daughter

Selampione with one of the documents specifying Greek “law” (*P.Yadin* II 10; I 18). Nevertheless, coming as they do two generations after the reduction of Jerusalem and on the eve of the Bar Kokhba revolt, which accounts for their deposit and preservation, it is hard to take the ethnic references as entirely empty scribal formulas. At the very least, they attest to legal alternatives opened up by provincialization and to possible reconfigurations of marriage and household structure in a changing political and administrative context.

Certainly, there is nothing innocent about the Mishnah’s assertion of the normativity of marriage contracts or its drawing conclusions from the “law of Moses and the Jews.” What is significant is the discursive fashioning of rabbinic authority: rabbis positioned themselves as the arbiters over what many of their contemporaries would have understood as conventional but what rabbis asserted were normative, even if alternative contractual forms and substantive arrangements were possible. Precisely because the marriage contract drew on a wider documentary convention, rabbis could use it to articulate the obligations of a father toward his daughters (as in Eleazar b. Azariah’s tradition) or to determine what ritual or social behaviors were beyond the pale of “Jewish” marriage as in *mKet* 7.6. For those Jews for whom the conventions of an indigenous legal tradition—eroded by Roman rule, not to mention two disastrous revolts—remained salient, the insistence that a traditional form was not merely conventional and still applicable but normative was, in rabbinic hands, a powerful statement of Jewish alterity.¹⁵ At the same time, the rabbinic claim of being masters of that indigenous tradition was an important element of rabbinic self-fashioning.

It may not be accidental that documentary formulas from the marriage contract, along with others related to marriage, are the most widely cited in early rabbinic texts. It is not only that by convention the document explicitly invokes indigenous legal tradition, “the laws of Moses and the Jews.” Women and their normative gender roles, as they often do in such periods of significant social change as those precipitated by colonial or imperial rule, proved a useful category for Jewish men with which to think Jewishness in subject Judaea.¹⁶ In our case, the appropriation of a documentary formula has the effect of creating a reference to women that is both ethnically charged and peculiar in tannaitic rabbinic language.

Dat, for instance, appears only here in the Mishnah, and the designation of Moses as the source of the Bible or biblical laws is rare.¹⁷ As an ethnic or political referent, “the Jews” (*yehudim*) is stranger still. The preferred expression for Jews in the Mishnah is “Israel,” and for women, typically “daughters

of (*benot*) Israel.” *Yehudim* appears in the Mishnah in only three passages, one of which is a quotation of a biblical verse (Esth 2.5).¹⁸ The passage in the Tosefta corresponding to this Mishnah has “Israel,” suggesting that a formulation more closely connected to the Mishnah’s usual language was possible (tKet 7.6). The possibility that the editors of the Mishnah actively intended their peculiar language is stronger if we prefer the textual tradition that reads *yehudit* instead of *yehudim*,¹⁹ a reading that, on analogy with “rule of Moses,” *dat moshe*, should perhaps be translated as “rule of the Jewess.”

The Mishnah’s use of “Jews” or “Jewess” as opposed to “Israel” may thus reflect a choice on the part of its editors that has the consequence, conscious or not, of reflecting the language of outsiders—notably, the Roman state and its local representatives—toward Jews with respect to the transgressive wife. Cynthia Baker has provocatively diagnosed here a moment of colonial mimicry in which rabbis adopt strategies of power from the “external” ruling elite.²⁰ Such a strategy would locate rabbis precisely within the ambivalent and hybrid middle ground produced in the imperial encounter. Even if we weaken Baker’s reading with the argument that “Jews” (especially reading *yehudim*, not *yehudit*) is the reflexive citation of a documentary formula, the “Jewish” woman of our passage is still constituted as subject to rabbinic law, in the narrower sense that the text authorizes her divorce but also in that it is the rabbis who invoke and define “the rule of Moses and Israel” in the broader context of Israelite marriage law. As Baker stresses, the Jewish woman appears here as, and because she is, resistant to that rule. As a consequence, she is distanced (“othered”)—if not linguistically, then by divorce.

Rule of the Jewess? Sexualizing the Gaze: tKet 7.6 and tSot 5.9

The corresponding passage to our Mishnah in the Tosefta clearly intersects with our text (overlaps with the Mishnah are in *italics*):

And so, too, she who *goes out with her head uncovered/unbound*, goes out with her clothing torn,²¹ and her heart is coarse toward her male slaves and her female slaves [or] with her neighbors,²² goes out and *spins in the marketplace*, bathes herself and others (*rohetset u-merahetset*) in the bathhouse *with every man* (or: *everyone*),²³ let her *go out without her ketubah*, for she has not behaved with him *according to the law of Moses and Israel* (tKet 7.6).

"And so, too" links this passage to the one preceding, which specifies cases in which the husband must give his wife a divorce and provide the marital settlement "because he has not behaved with her according to the laws of Moses and Israel" (tKet 7.6).²⁴ The husband, in this passage, has used a vow to prohibit his wife from giving others food that she has cooked, requires pointless and demeaning labor ("that she fill vessels and pour them out on the dung heap"),²⁵ and demands her reporting to others of intimate conversations between them. The Tosefta thus rhetorically balances the wife's transgressions with the husband's. The two lists are not equivalent, however. The husband's shortcomings bind the wife by vows that neither may easily transgress and requirements that impose directly on the wife, while the wife's have to do with her own comportment. Husband and wife are balanced here only in the fundamentally asymmetrical relationship between husband and wife that the Tosefta presupposes.

As elsewhere, the Tosefta as an edited document clearly "knows" the Mishnah: it provides three glosses to traditions that appear in the Mishnah but not in the Tosefta's list.²⁶ What is more difficult to determine is the precise relationship between the individual units—in this case, clearly related lists—used by the respective editors of the Mishnah and Tosefta. After the designation "Moses and Israel" in the Tosefta, the most significant difference between the two lists is that those present only in the Tosefta concern revealing the wife's body and thematize her sexualized visibility and her inappropriate intimacy both in her household (such as a lack of appropriate shame or modesty before slaves) and in public (cf. mSot 1.6).

In the Mishnah's list of transgressions of the "rule of the Jews/Jewess," by contrast, the items are not explicitly sexual, although they are capable of bearing—and are elsewhere provided with—sexualized interpretations.²⁷ What seems to be at issue, at least on the surface, is the wife's behaving "in the marketplace" as she might at home, thus reversing social codes of wifeliness.²⁸ The additions attributed to Abba Shaul (that she curses) and Tarfon (that she is loud) also involve nonsexual reversals of wifely propriety.²⁹

If the Tosefta has utilized the Mishnah's list, it is the Tosefta's editors, presumably, who have balanced the husband's and wife's transgressions. Surprisingly, by increasing the number of items subject to the husband's disciplinary action and sexualizing its referents, the Tosefta's version may go some distance toward limiting the nature of the transgression to bodily immodesty. Note that where the Mishnah prohibits "speaking" to anyone, the corresponding item in the Tosefta is public (mixed-sex?) bathing, perhaps accompanied by behavioral intimacy.³⁰

Despite the ethnic or religious indexing, there is nothing necessarily “Jewish” (or “Israelite”) about the behaviors labeled as such in our lists. Covered or bound hair may well have been conventional among many women in the Roman Empire, Jewish or not. The famously tortured response of Paul to women praying and prophesying with their heads uncovered, for instance, suggests a conscious break with conventional practice at Corinth.³¹ As for mixed-sex bathing (“with everyone”), this was singled out by Clement of Alexandria (roughly contemporaneous with the Mishnah) and the Christian authors of the *Didascalia apostolorum* (roughly contemporaneous with the Tosefta, as usually dated) as a problem of Christian behavior and women’s modesty.³² According to Cassius Dio, another contemporary of early rabbinic literature, the emperor Hadrian commanded men and women to bathe separately. The fourth-century *Historia Augusta* has Hadrian provide (?) sex-segregated baths, and further attributes prohibitions of mixed bathing to the author Marcus Aurelius and Alexander Severus (the latter, reversing permission by Elagabalus, and restoring a previous prohibition).³³

It is also worth noting the ethnic and cultural subtexts of moralizing about mixed-sex bathing in first-century Rome and elsewhere:³⁴ Pliny the Elder, decrying the luxury of the baths of Rome (a fall from previous austerity), notes disapprovingly the presence of women. In his biography of Cato, Plutarch asserts that Romans learned naked bathing from Greeks, but they, in turn, infected (*anapeplēkasi*) Greeks with mixed-sex bathing.³⁵ For Plutarch, the Greek intellectual, mixed bathing is thus “Roman” and its avoidance traditionally “Greek,” much as the Tosefta marks the avoidance as “Jewish.”

Remarkably reminiscent of our own passages, Quintilian cites as examples of inappropriate reasoning from “signs” (*signa*): “For if it is a sign of adultery for a woman to bathe with men, then dining with young men or enjoying an intimate friendship with someone should be, too. Perhaps one might say that a depilated body, a halting gait, or feminine clothing are signs of an effeminate and “inadequate” (*mollis et parum*) man for one for whom . . . those [signs] appear to flow [inevitably] from shamefulness as blood from a wound” (*Institutions of Oratory* 5.9.14).

Like tKet 7.6, Quintilian uses examples that balance what we might conclude about men and about women—in this case, because of the inappropriate comportment of either. For Quintilian, mixed bathing and other behaviors are stigmatized. So far, our two Tosefta texts agree, but these behaviors do not, for Quintilian, conclusively lead to a presumption of adultery. Conceivably, the authors of our list would agree with Quintilian on the indeterminacy of

the conclusion. However, as they are discussing the rights of husbands with respect to their wives rather than providing guidance for forensic oration, our rabbinic texts can mark the behaviors as transgressive and legally disabling.

The Tosefta's list reappears in tSot 5.9, where it is put to different use—a catalog of ways that one classifies women and evaluates men: “R. Meir used to say, as one evaluates food, so one evaluates women.”³⁶ The (grudging) acknowledgment in tSotah that “average” men do not divorce women for speaking with relatives or neighbors, even if male, suggests a graded social code of familiarity and sociability whose precise rules are left unstated (what, precisely, is a “neighbor”?) and may provide at least a bit of contour to the Mishnah's rejection of speaking with “every” man. At the same time, the context of tSot 5.9 is striking for its misogyny and metaphorical objectification. A woman is a dish, a food to be consumed or discarded, and the fly that may contaminate it.

It is worth remembering rabbinic texts do their cultural work not by instructing women directly or by policing men or women but by shaping the discursive horizons of the students of rabbinic traditions, who are almost universally construed as men.³⁷ Our texts range from the hostile to the seemingly evenhanded, but all three mobilize conventions about comportment and public visibility as the normative legal definitions (in negative) of a Jewish or an Israelite wife's behavior.³⁸ They do not insist on a distinctive Jewish (or rabbinic) woman's uniform necessarily recognizable to proximate outsiders (as, for instance, the Roman *stola* in antiquity, or the Islamic *hijab* or Mennonite head covering, particularly in contemporary mixed and secular contexts, might be).³⁹ Instead, they train the gaze of the student of the texts to discern “insider” women and their comportment, through their particular deployment of conventional practices. The rhetorical strategy is in keeping with the appropriation of the terminology of the marriage contract: rabbis here position themselves as those with authority and guardianship over normative Jewish tradition and, in so doing, may innovate, as analogous conservative invocations of authoritative traditions or pasts often do.⁴⁰

Tosefta *Sotah* 5.9 is significant because it specifies what is at stake in this critically attuned looking: the text discusses various visible behaviors of women but explicitly provides a typology of men. Much as the case narratives in the Mishnah construct the client of rabbis as a pious adherent of rabbinic circles, mKet 7.6 and the related Tosefta texts we have been discussing articulate a feature of what it means to be a rabbinic Jewish man: how, ideally, to manage one's household; when to cut ties, particularly when to do so with

financial impunity; and how to evaluate the quality of women “in the marketplace”—and, perhaps more significant, how to evaluate the men with whom they are associated.

Domestic Dramas: yKet 7.6, 31b–c

In its treatment of mKet 7.6, the Palestinian Talmud reflects no knowledge of the Tosefta’s construction of the “laws of Moses and Israel.”⁴¹ The Yerushalmi provides discussion of the spatial and technical aspects of “go[ing] out with head uncovered/unbound,” as well as glosses for “loud,” but what occupies the bulk of the discussion is the matter of losing the *ketubah* and delineations of sexual malfeasance. Although space does not allow for a full treatment, the material dealing with sexual malfeasance is worth quoting in full:

[A] R. Eleazar in the name of R. Ḥanina: They saw her tying her sash (*sinar*) and a peddler was coming out of her house, the matter is ugly (*ka’ur* [*ka’ur*]): she should go out; slime (*rok*) on her bed, the matter is ugly: she should go out; slime on his bed, the matter is ugly: she should go out; his shoes before her bed, the matter is ugly: she should go out; her shoes before his bed, the matter is ugly: she should go out; both of them coming out of a dark place, the matter is ugly: she should go out; raising one another out of a cistern, the matter is ugly: she should go out; her slapping on her thigh in the bathhouse,⁴² the matter is ugly: she should go out.⁴³

[B] R. Ḥanina b. Iqa in the name of R. Judah: If she brought proof for her words, she is believed.

Rab Ada b. Aḥawa in the name of Rab: A case (*ma’aseh*) came before R. [Judah the Patriarch], and he said: “So what?”

They asked before him:⁴⁴ “Even if he put his mouth on hers?”

He said: “A matter like this is ugly, she should go out.”

[C] A case involving one whom they saw putting his mouth on hers [kissing a man not her husband].⁴⁵

The matter came before R. Yose, who said: “Let her go out without her dowry.”⁴⁶

The relations were challenging and saying: If she is an adulteress (*sotah*) let her go out without dowry; if she is not an adulteress, let her go out with her whole dowry.

R. Mana said to them: “Bring her marriage document⁴⁷ and let us read it.”

And they found written in it: If this X should “hate” this Y and will not desire his partnership, she shall take half her dowry [and be released from the marriage].

Said R. Abun: “Since she was willing for him to put his mouth on hers, is she not like one who has ‘hated’ and she has only half the dowry?”⁴⁸

[D] She is in his bosom or (*we-*) he is in her bosom, she is an adulteress (*sotah*); they are embracing, she is an adulteress; they are kissing, she is an adulteress; the door is locked, she is an adulteress; [the door is merely] shut, we are in doubt. (yKet 7.6, 31b–c)

The connection between this extended discussion and the Mishnah or the preceding pericope is not made clear. Indeed, we seem to have moved very far from “the rule of Moses and the Jews/Jewess/Israel” of the tannaitic texts. The focus now is overwhelmingly sexual and there is no attempt to classify transgressions along the grid provided by the Mishnah. I propose, somewhat tentatively, that the list in A provides examples for a *baraita* appearing earlier that concludes “And she who goes out [that is, is divorced] due to a bad name (*shem raʿ*) loses [her claim to] everything.”⁴⁹ If that is the case, our passage is a thematic extension of the topic of the Mishnah to other kinds of divorces with a loss of claim settlement but does not develop the Mishnah directly.

In its own way, this Yerushalmi pericope recapitulates the strategy of mKet 7.6. The Yerushalmi provides two lists of circumstances, none of them marked “Jewish” as such, that give grounds for divorce with no financial consequences for the husband, although, unlike the Mishnah (and rather like Quintilian, who attests to diversity of legal opinion and practice), rabbis debate whether certain *signa* are to be taken as determinative of transgressive behavior. The case narrative in C is an interesting example of rabbis failing to enforce their formally constituted law, opting instead to base their rulings on the marriage document. In its literary context, the case gives rabbis the opportunity to extend their normative authority over a conventional marriage contract and thus “rabbinize” it.⁵⁰

There are, however, significant differences between the Yerushalmi and the Mishnah. First, the Yerushalmi’s list of “ugly” behaviors is preceded by “they saw her” (*ra’u otah*); in the Yerushalmi, the reader’s gaze is directed not to public comportment or even wives alone but to signs visible only to intimate

members of the household (stained bedclothes, misplaced shoes). Moreover, this text positions its student as the audience of a bawdy domestic fiction or drama (the “adultery mime”), imagining a story of extramarital sex and deceit of the kind that Apuleius invokes repeatedly in the *Metamorphoses* and that the Yerushalmi elsewhere seems clearly to make use of.⁵¹

Second, the explicit rhetorical marking of the transgressions as against “Jewish” norms is absent in the Yerushalmi. Practices are simply “ugly” or grounds for divorce. Implicitly, however, ethnic self-definition is still at issue. In its (mis)use of a specifically “Jewish” legal term for “adulteress,” namely *sotah*,⁵² the Yerushalmi pericope taken as a whole may be taking a rhetorical tack diametrically opposed to that of the Mishnah and Tosefta. Where the tannaitic corpora labeled the problematic behaviors outside of those of Jewish women, the Yerushalmi pericope makes them the transgressions of Jewish adulteresses. The Yerushalmi may thus enclose both normative behavior and transgression *within* a “Jewish” (that is, rabbinic) world. Perhaps, then, the shift between the Mishnah and the Yerushalmi signals a world definitively and autonomously “Jewish” (or, more specifically, rabbinized), less constrained to see the boundaries of ethnic difference in the comportment of its women.

But if such is the world that the Yerushalmi conjures, the deployment of the literary adultery motif suggests that this world was hardly insulated. At the risk of pushing the use of the motif too far, if the list of “ugly” behaviors recalls common literary tropes or scenes from public entertainments, embedded in that recollection is the consistent coding as “gentile” and negative the treatment of theaters and what goes on in them.⁵³ Appropriating literary or dramatic motifs, then, may be an instance of colonial mimicry through which, again, the Yerushalmi subtly recapitulates the Mishnah’s ethnic indexing of a wife’s behavior.

Conclusion

Debates about public bathing and the very norms of female and wifely comportment discussed in these texts are conventional elements of later Roman Mediterranean morality. They are as significant for locating rabbis within the culture of the empire as for their marking rabbinic rejection of that culture. The material we have been discussing confounds an easy dichotomization between “Jewish” and “Roman” or between accommodation and resistance.⁵⁴ It suggests that we examine our sources for evidence of identity formation, for

the cultural work of becoming and perpetuating “Israel” as opposed to “the nations of the world” through discursive (and, in the world beyond the texts available to us, bodily, experiential) engagement with the world of which Jews were a part.

One piece of that cultural work involves the making of rabbis as a coherent ideological group. Students of our texts are provided lenses through which to view women. In this way, they may learn to identify spousal relations and the mutual evaluation of men as the subject of a “traditional” Israelite discourse of which rabbis are the masters. That mastery can become the source of power among adherents when rabbis apply that traditional discourse to resolve conflicts and rule on cases. The case cited in the *Yerushalmi* serves in the text as yet another piece of transmitted rabbinic tradition. However, the responsiveness of the judges to family members protesting the initial ruling and their willingness to base the final ruling on the text of a non-rabbinic marriage document underscore the limits on the authority of an indigenous elite even when that authority is asserted. Just how representative the case narratives are of rabbinic activities is beyond the scope of this essay;⁵⁵ but surely, the dynamic of indigenous elites merging local practices, specialized knowledge, and general norms into a putatively normative tradition offers a point of entry to reexamine both provincial culture and the history of the rabbinic movement.

The subject matter of this volume reflects the impact of cultural studies and of postcolonial theory on the study of Late Antiquity, and particularly on the study of the place of Jews in the later Roman Empire. Much of the theoretical work, as well as its deployment in scholarship on Late Antiquity and on Jews, frequently leaves indigenous elites under-examined and under-theorized. The regnant models emphasize dichotomies—between domination and resistance, ruler and subject or subaltern—and seek to recover hidden worlds of resistant agency. A persistent dichotomizing of rulers and ruled leads to “the incarceration of agency within the trope of resistance against oppressive and dominating operations of power,” to borrow language from Saba Mahmood’s critique of the feminist study of women’s agency.⁵⁶ It overlooks—in fact, sweeps under the rug—the formation and development of new, traditionalizing, indigenous, and sometimes politically resistant (but more often not) social groups that can attempt to exercise power or influence locally. Rabbis, a politically accommodationist provincial group from late antique Palestine, offer a point of entry into the question of how some “subalterns”—circumscribed by class, status, and gender—learn to “speak,” in

Gayatri Spivak's famous formulation, to fashion domains of autonomy, as well as power exercised upon others, in a world not of their own making.⁵⁷

Precisely because rabbinic texts present a local, provincial discourse that is unattested for almost any other provincial group in the later Roman Empire, rabbis' history of self-fashioning offers a specific point of entry into the contested question of provincial Romanization. As part of the larger academic reconsideration of power, hegemony, and identity, students of the Roman empire and Late Antiquity have in recent decades given renewed attention to the persistence or the creation of local identities as widely dispersed as Gaul, Britain, Egypt, and the Roman near east.⁵⁸ Almost inevitably, these studies deploy essentializing (Romans, Greeks, Celts, Jews) and often strongly dichotomous models of cultural contact (assimilation, accommodation, acculturation, resistance) that the best of these studies then problematize.⁵⁹ Studies of Jews within the Roman Empire—still largely written by scholars with a personal stake in the history of the Jews, on the basis of evidence that is preselected by preservation or identifiability as “Jewish” to stress Jews' difference—are even more dichotomous than most.⁶⁰ The case of rabbis warns against studying late antique Jews (or anyone else) exclusively along the lines of an ethnic, religious, or cultural divide separating Jews from gentiles (“Greeks”; “Romans”) or subjects from rulers. Rabbis straddled that divide, demonstrating a high level of acculturation as well as clearly articulated cultural difference and resistance. By attending to the ways that rabbis constituted and maintained ethnic identities through the deployment of the conventional as normative, we may be able to say more about ethnic self-fashioning in the later Roman world.

PART II

Christianization and Other Modalities of Romanization

IN PART II, we consider Romanization in relation to Christianization (especially in the fourth to sixth centuries). Part I pointed to the potential in the triangulation of Jewish, Roman, and Christian literary evidence. In Part II, we come to challenges of correlating different perspectives. Late antique Jewish sources are ahistorical in genre and horizon; indeed, after Josephus, there are no surviving Jewish-authored works of Jewish history until the Middle Ages. By contrast, the archive for Late Antiquity is rich in Christian histories and biographies, which can often chronicle events and figures in tantalizingly concrete terms. If scholars of late antique Judaism must struggle to uncover traces left by known historical events in writings that resist history, scholars of late antique Christianity must strive to recall that history writing was part of the arsenal of Christian persuasion.

Joshua Levinson raises such questions through the Jewish genre that seems to exempt itself most from historical time: midrash. He recovers traces of the Christianization of the Holy Land in rabbinic materials in which it seems poignantly absent. The genre of midrash is called into play on several levels. Its single-minded focus on Scripture denies soteriological significance to an increasingly visible Christian topography. The very denial of the witness afforded by the present removes the Christian from the Land, even as it colludes in effacing the Jew from history. Rabbinic midrash is a distinct expression here refracted through and against the distorted “Jewishness” of Christian colonizing rhetoric and practice. As in the essays of Dohrmann and Lapin, we see how the frame of empire encloses a common cultural vocabulary that can be crafted into a distinctive dialect by players with divergent aims. The ahistorical voice and content of midrash draw it out of the historical discussion; Levinson gets it back in.

Hagith Sivan brings us into the worlds of two fifth-century counterparts to the provincial sub-elites discussed by Adler—their ambition for advancement and self-promotion, in this case, now bolstered by their status as bishops in an imperially sanctioned Christianity. The situations in which Bishops Porphyry and Severus find themselves speak to the enduring heterogeneity of the Roman Empire. Porphyry’s biographer Mark dramatizes his promotion of Christianity in Gaza as a battle between Christ, on the one hand, and Marna and Aphrodite, on the other. Yet it is only with recourse to imperial support that the bishop is able to make space for Christianity in a city already crowded with deities: the force and threat of the imperial army are what allow a church,

for instance, to be built atop Gaza's Marneion. Even Mark's hagiographic account of Porphyry betrays the limits of such successes—so precarious as to become almost unraveled by the passing visit of a Manichaean woman. Attention to the place of imperial intervention in such accounts helps highlight dynamics obscured by the Christian retelling of local events as cosmic religious struggles. The case of Severus in Minorca is especially stark, inasmuch as the forced conversion of Jews seems to occur outside imperial sanction. In Minorca, however, what is striking is the presence of a powerful Jewish community in the region in the fifth century. The local political dynamics are predicated on the paradox of a numerical minority of Christians rewriting "pagans" and Jews as the empire's minorities.

Oded Irshai tackles this irony head-on: Jews remain even within those triumphalistic Christian narratives of empire that most seek to write them out of history. Most previous scholarship has determined late antique historians' depictions of Jews to be caricatured, and their function marginal, but Irshai demonstrates their careful deployment. In the *History* of Socrates Scholasticus (ca. 439), for instance, Jews are often used to keep score in narratives about power struggles between Christian leaders. The public Jews described by Socrates are in close contact with the Roman authorities, confident in their legal status, and emboldened to confront local Christians. They seem leagues apart from the Jews we meet in the inward-looking exemplars of the rabbinic corpus adduced by Levinson.

The explicit Christian remapping of the Jewish and pagan space documented by Sivan and Irshai has no counterpart in the Jewish texts that remain from the period. The one place in which Christian and rabbinic sources seem most to overlap, with respect to Christianization, is in their shared attempts to write Jews out of the story of Christian Rome. Even if we accord Eusebius the lion's share of credit for effacing Jews from history after the two Jewish revolts, the isolationism of the rabbinic sources suggests that some Jews, at least, colluded in this conceptual erasure. Yet again, closer attention to Christian and Jewish sources may point to dynamics more reciprocal, paradoxical, and complex than those that emerge from dichotomous analyses. As Irshai's project makes plain, Jews remain strangely present even in those Christian narratives that seem so convinced that Judaism is a relic of the pre-Christian past. Conversely, Christian literature is rarely quite as historical as it might claim.

When we look to different genres, different pictures arise. Ophir Münz-Manor uses liturgical sources to recover social realities of contact that the authors examined by Levinson, Irshai, and Sivan seem to wish to rewrite,

erase, or suppress. Joining those who are working to upturn the old notion that prayer replaced sacrifice in Late Antiquity, Münz-Manor uses poetry to enter the sacrificial mentalité of synagogue and church in the fourth and fifth centuries, in which prayer was recast as sacrifice. He shows how the language used to perform communal difference is a ritual and symbolic lexicon common to late antique Jews, Christians, and “pagans.” For each, debates over sacrifice were deeply implicated in local reflection on imperial universalizing. Münz-Manor’s application of ritual theory and comparative poetics to a body of sources normally ignored by historians establishes these sources as vital correctives to the more explicit historical data; the questions he asks reveal the shared literary inheritance and the circulation of ideas in the Near East—at once throwing the rhetorical nature of the historical sources into relief and destabilizing their romance of reified communal boundaries. The ritual poetics unearthed by Münz-Manor belie easy separations, not just of time but also of communities and identities. “It is striking,” he notes, “that the Christian materials analyzed here do not follow the anti-Jewish tropes common in patristic literature of dismissing sacrifice as emblemizing those Jewish traditions that were rejected, superseded, or spiritualized.” Like Berkowitz, he shows how ostensibly insider materials, Jewish and Christian, can be used to complicate familiar narratives about Christianity and Christianization.

The place of Jewish material on the horizon of Romanness finds new expression in the constellation of images of royal pageantry brought by Raʿanan Boustán. His essay has at its core the marvelous throne of King Solomon—complete, in places, with hydraulics and robotic birds and lions. Solomonic imagery was a component of the elaborate court ceremonial typical of the Byzantine and early medieval world cross-culturally, as it developed from Late Antiquity into the tenth century and later. Inasmuch as Solomon’s kingship authorized the distinctly imperial *cosmocrator* of the Byzantine basilica, the Old Testament—and thus Jews—became an interesting nexus in the chain of Roman imperial ideology. At the same time, biblical traditions fed the evolution of throne ideas shared by Roman, Sassanian, and later Islamic worlds. The later ideas, developed in largely non-Jewish circles, seem to have been imbibed by Jews and written back into their own throne traditions. The multiple inversions are as striking as the continual interchanges: the Solomon legacy found a life of its own in Christian contexts, as an expression of Roman imperial ideology, eventually to be reappropriated by Jewish exegetes. Here again, Roman-ness and empire endure as context and contact zone for bridging the biblical past and the late antique present, within and between Jews and Christians.

There Is No Place Like Home: Rabbinic Responses to the Christianization of Palestine

JOSHUA LEVINSON

The trouble with countries is that, once people begin travelling in them . . . they are apt to get over-written.

—R. Macaulay, *The Towers of Trebizond*¹

A tannaitic midrash from the mid-third century, in glossing Jer 3.19—“I gave you a desirable land, the fairest heritage of all the nations”—states that “just as they used to say in Rome that any king or governor who did not acquire a residence in Rome would say, ‘I have accomplished nothing,’ so now any king or governor who did not acquire a palace or a villa in Palestine says, ‘I have accomplished nothing’” (SifreDeut 37). In this text, rabbinic local patriotism reverses center and periphery by praising the attractions of Palestine in the eyes of foreign landlords. A later, post-Constantinian rendering of this tradition adds not only that “all the kings of the world desired it” but also that “any sovereign who did not rule in Palestine would say that his dominion is of no value” and even “is not called a king” (GenR 85.14; Tanḥuma Buber, *Mishpatim* 10).

Between these two texts, we can witness the emergence of Palestine as a new type of symbolic capital: while the early text merely lauds ownership as an individual status symbol, the later one makes its possession a cornerstone

and precondition of empire. Somehow, in this reversed fantasy, the conquered nation is proud of its subordinate status because power in Rome depends upon possession of Palestine. This text seems to register from its own subaltern perspective the idea that a truly Christian empire must firmly rest on possession of Palestine, and it ironically supports Constantine's desire to balance Constantinople as *Roma Nova* with Jerusalem as the Christian capital.²

The Christianization of the Holy Land as an imperial project and as a result of the "practice of everyday life," like that of the empire itself, was a long and gradual process that "cannot be regarded as in any sense complete before the reign of Justinian."³ Nevertheless, the conceptual and physical conversion of Palestine into a Christian Holy Land, the localizing of Christian myths, and the monumentalization of its landscape were already under way in the latter half of the fourth and the early fifth century in Palestine, and it appears to have proceeded at a pace "unmatched in either scope or dynamics in any other part of the Roman empire."⁴ From this perspective only, we could hazard to say, following Fergus Millar, that "the Christianization, and the Christian monumentalization, of the landscape of Palestine may have begun immediately after Constantine's conversion."⁵

This radical innovation, the invention of a Christian Holy Land—which was accomplished with no small amount of rhetorical and ideological violence—had palpable ramifications. "Within just a few decades of Constantine's decision to build the Church of the Holy Sepulchre," Doron Bar has remarked, "dozens of holy sites connected to Jesus, his disciples and to the events of the Old Testament were identified within the boundaries of Palestine."⁶ It would seem that nothing could emphasize in a more visceral fashion the triumph of Christianity than its conquest of real and imagined space: the roads filling with pilgrims; the sounds of church construction ringing throughout the cities; and new, or newly "baptized," holy sites sprouting up on the map. The Holy Land became, neither for the first time nor the last, what Mary Louise Pratt has called a contact zone: "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination."⁷

In the beginning of the fourth century, Eusebius mentions that "believers in Christ congregate [in Jerusalem] from all parts of the world" (*DE* 6.18.23), and a cursory glance at the *Itinerarium* of Bordeaux (333 CE) or Egeria's letter (381–384 CE) reveals an impressive list of established sites, guides, and ritualized codes of behavior, all reflecting a well-developed infrastructure for sacred travel. This appropriation of the Holy Land must have been acutely felt in

relation to Jewish sites, where an “interpretational imperialism lent itself to both a textual and a literal usurpation of the Jews’ history and holy sites.”⁸ In fact, the great majority of the sites visited by the early pilgrims, such as Egeria and Jerome’s Paula, were connected to biblical figures.⁹ If we add to this list the *Lives of the Prophets* as a fourth-century text, as suggested by David Satran, the list is even longer.¹⁰

For all citizens of this contact zone, native and tourist alike, this process necessitated the creation of new concepts of space and new fictions of identity. Like the grains of sand falling from an hourglass, the rabbis and other Jews must have felt their own land and identity gradually slipping away from them. Certainly by the fifth century, it would have been apparent that they were on the way to becoming strangers in their own land. Yet rabbinic texts seem surprisingly silent about this new and threatening phenomenon that changed forever the map of Palestine. Does this silence indicate indifference, ignorance, or a mistaken sense of security?

In discussing the combination of power, prestige, and sanctity in the creation of the Christian Holy Land, Jonathan Z. Smith remarks that this new map was “laid palimpsest-like over the old, and interacting with it in complex ways. . . . It was a venture made possible at least as much by the Hadrianic ‘erasure’ of elements of the past as it was by the discovery of new modes of Christian topographical significance.”¹¹ This image of the palimpsest is suggestive. Undoubtedly, the building of the Church of the Sepulchre upon the ruins of Hadrian’s Temple of Venus—which looked upon the ruins of the Temple Mount with a satisfied imperial gaze—was a Christian triumphalist narrative fashioned in stone. As Jerome declared, “[C]hurches are set up like standards to commemorate the Lord’s victories” (*Ep.* 46.13).¹² However, Smith’s palimpsest suggests that the old text was not completely erased and could still be read between the lines of the new one. Andrew Jacobs, in his study of the image and function of the local Jews in Christian travel narratives, illuminates how these devotional tourists and pilgrims “staked their imperial claims on a self-conscious appropriation of Jewish space and knowledge.”¹³ But what of the *scriptio inferior*, the underwriting of this palimpsest: How did these Jews view their new and uninvited neighbors?

This is not an entirely new question. Wilken has suggested that the Jews of Palestine “could sense that these Christians, unlike the Romans of old, were not indifferent to the spiritual qualities of the land. What did they make of the Christian presence in Eretz Israel?” Basing himself mostly upon the archeological evidence of the period his answer is surprisingly irenic: “with

few exceptions Jews were to go about their communal affairs and practice their way of life without interference . . . displaying a resolute indifference to anything that clouded the memory or compromised the life of the community.”¹⁴ Likewise, although Joan Taylor is probably correct when she says that the “Jews appear to have been wholly unprepared for what took place in the 4th century in regard to tombs and sites which had spiritual significance,” her explanation takes a problematic tack when she states that “as for the Jewish reaction to the loss of their venerated tombs, a certain amount of pragmatism appears to have prevailed [in their acting as local guides and informants]. . . . The Jews’ willingness to cooperate can be understood if we remember that most of the early pilgrims to Palestine were affluent. It is no wonder that we hear of Jews going to great lengths to pander to the visitors.”¹⁵

Notwithstanding the fact that the apparent rabbinic textual silence is perplexing, I doubt if archeological evidence alone or “economic pandering” is the proper venue to seek out the rabbinic response. Given the extent and complexity of the Jewish-Christian dialogue in this period, I am going to assume that although the rabbis and the local Jewish population may have responded differently, they were very much cognizant of what was going on around them.¹⁶ This then is the question I wish to examine: can we find in rabbinic literature—the *scriptio inferior*—responses to this Christian appropriation of Palestine as a holy land? I want to explore here three possible reactions, sometimes overlapping and sometimes contradictory: appropriation, deterritorialization, and relocation.

Appropriation and Sacred (Re)colonization

The first possible response is appropriation—that is, emerging pilgrim practices were adopted by the Jews and adapted to their own ideological ends. I call this process “negotiated appropriation,” by which I mean how dominant or emergent ideologies are inflected for the use of competing groups “who select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant culture.”¹⁷

One of the important developments in this period for Jews and Christians alike was the realignment and reinterpretation of sacred space. For Jews, this development was necessitated by the loss of a sacred center, while for Christians by its gain.¹⁸ There is evidence that individuals continued to visit Jerusalem and the Temple ruins throughout this period in a weak but steady stream,¹⁹ but such visits only exacerbated the differences between a glorious

past and the gloomy present; as Lamentations Rabbah (ca. late fifth–early sixth century) says: “In the past, I used to go up [to the Temple] in the shade of the Holy One, blessed be he, but now in the shadow of [oppressive] governments. . . . In the past, I used to go up in crowds of holiday makers, but now I go up in silence and come down in silence” (LamR 1.25). Ironically, but not altogether surprisingly, the experience portrayed here is a reversal of the Christian experience, where “prior to the fourth century, learned Christians visited in order to see how Palestine had been brought low. After Constantine, Christian pilgrims came to see the land’s glory.”²⁰

This loss of a sacred center, attended by the Christian monumentalization of the landscape, may have contributed to the emergence of new types of sacred space, which could well be the result of cultural mimicry. One example of this process could be the new religious dimension and function of sacred graves that became a charged arena for cultural communication and competition between Jews, Christians, and pagans. Given the belief in the continued efficacy of the holy man after his death—that it is possible to “join Heaven and Earth at the grave of a dead human being”²¹—it is not surprising that his tomb became the point of union between holy man and holy land, as well as a site for pilgrimage. Yet, as Satran has remarked, there is much evidence from a variety of fourth-century sources that the veneration of the dead and their graves was something new in the world of Late Antiquity, and the rapid multiplication of holy graves aroused the anger and sometimes ridicule of pagan critics.²² We can readily hear this criticism in Eusebius’s defense of his emperor: “Those who in blindness of their souls are ignorant of matters divine hold the deed a joke and frankly ridiculous, believing that for so great a sovereign to bother himself with memorials to human corpses and tombs is unfitting and demeaning.”²³ Likewise, Emperor Julian complained that the Christians “keep adding many corpses newly dead to the corpse of long ago. You have filled the whole world with tombs and sepulchers, yet where in your holy books does it tell you to prostrate yourself at the tombs and pay honors to the dead?” (*Contra Galilaeos* 335c).²⁴

While Jews did have traditions of grave memorials for the patriarchs and some personalities of the past—and the early Christian itineraries attest to such local knowledge—given the biblical horror of corpse impurity, it is not surprising that at least some Jews were reluctant to give way to this new attitude toward the dead that marked, in the words of Robin Lane Fox, “a break in previous religious life.”²⁵ We can clearly hear voices of pre-Constantinian Jewish opposition in the third-century *Didascalia apostolorum*: “Indeed, in the

Second Legislation, if one touches a dead man or a tomb, he must be bathed. You, however, should act according to the Gospel and according to the power of the Holy Spirit, and come together even in the cemeteries, and read the Holy Scriptures" (*DA* 26).²⁶

Looking at various post-Constantinian rabbinic texts, we can still detect a certain hostility toward sacred graves; however, the basis of this opposition is not the biblical grounds of corpse impurity. Thus, the rabbis explain that Jacob requested not to be buried in Egypt (*Gen* 47.29) because he was afraid that his tomb might become a site for idolatrous worship (*GenR* 96.5; Tanḥuma Buber, *Vayehi* 5).²⁷ The biblical attitude toward the dead has been reshaped here to accommodate a new reality, as the veneration of graves is marked as the idolatrous practice of the Other. It is not corpse impurity per se that is the problem but rather liturgical function of graves as sacred space.

Along with this remotivated opposition, we witness the emergence of other more accommodating voices, such as the oft-cited tradition that Calev "prostrated himself upon the graves of the patriarchs, saying to them, 'My fathers, pray on my behalf that I may be delivered from the plan of the spies'" (*bSot* 34b). While this tradition only appears in the Babylonian Talmud in the name of a mid-fourth-century Palestinian émigré to Babylon, we also find depictions of fourth-century Palestinian figures who prayed for personal protection at familial rabbinic graves (*bTa'an* 23b). Similarly, the Palestinian midrash on Lamentations portrays Jeremiah going to the patriarchal Cave of the Machpelah on the eve of the destruction, saying, "Arise, for the time has come for you to plead before the Holy One," and Israel Ta-Shma has speculated that the depiction of R. Shimeon be Lakish marking specifically rabbinic graves (*bBM* 85b) was undertaken to designate them as sacred sites for prayer.²⁸ Another interesting case is the custom of visiting graves on fast days. While tannaitic literature lists various propitiatory rituals to be carried out by the community on these occasions, only in the later amoraic stratum of talmudic literature is it recorded that graves are visited. One reason given for this apparently new custom is so that "the dead may intercede for us" (*yTa'an* 2.1, 65a; *bTa'an* 16a).²⁹

An intriguing and enigmatic text appearing in Lamentations Rabbah (chap. 25; *bBK* 16b) explains the special honor done to Hezekiah at his burial (2 *Chron* 32.33): R. Yehudah b. Simon reports that a "rabbinic meetinghouse (*bet vaad*) was built upon his grave, and when the rabbis went there, they would say to him, 'Teach us.'" Another opinion states that they placed a scroll of the Torah upon his grave and said, "He who is in this coffin (*aron*) fulfilled what

is written in this [book].” In other words, the emerging practice proscribed in the *Didascalia*—that Christians “assembled even in the cemeteries, and read the holy Scriptures”—has here become a legitimate rabbinic practice.³⁰

This combination of venerated bier and book is something new,³¹ although it is not necessarily directly connected to Christian practices and could also be related to broader issues of the location of sacrality in Late Antiquity. Perhaps the most interesting example of this type of cultural mimicry is found in the fifth- or early sixth-century Palestinian midrash *Pesikta de-Rav Kahana* (PRK). This is the marvelous story about the violent rivalry between Gush Halav and Meron over the privilege of hosting R. Eliezer’s remains and their miraculous translation to Meron on the eve of the Day of Atonement:

After R. Eliezer died, he was buried in Gush Halav. R. Simeon [his father] began revealing himself [in a dream] to the inhabitants of Meron and said to them: “One right eye I had, and I have not merited that he be buried by my side!” Thereupon the people of Meron went and requested his body, but the inhabitants of Gush Halav came out after them with staffs and spears. Once on the eve of the Great Fast [Day of Atonement], they said, “Now is the time, [while the men of Gush Halav] are stuffing themselves,³² to bring him here.” As soon as they left the city, two fiery serpents proceeded in front of them. The people said, “[This as an omen] that this is the time for us to bring him.” When they arrived at the cave [in which R. Eliezer was buried], the two fiery serpents stationed themselves on either side of the entrance. The people asked, “Who will go in and bring him out?” His widow said, “I will enter and bring him out, because I have a sign to identify him.” She entered to bring him out, and found a worm gnawing behind his ear. She wanted to remove it, but heard a heavenly voice proclaim, “Leave the creditor to collect his debt!” They brought him and placed him by his father, and they said that from that time, R. Simeon no longer appeared to the men of Meron. (PRK 11.23)³³

This narrative comes at the conclusion of what is possibly the most developed hagiographic collection about a rabbinic personality. An analysis of the entire tale would take us far beyond the parameters of our subject, so I will just stress some salient points. Although the rabbis deliberated, as did Roman law and the church fathers, the sensitive issue of moving human remains (yMK 2.2,

81b),³⁴ I know of no other text in rabbinic literature that records a conflict over the privilege of hosting remains and exemplifies so clearly how “bones become both an avenue to power in Late Antiquity and provide new opportunities for competition.”³⁵

Despite Peter Brown’s assertion that “in Judaism the holy graves and the rabbinate drifted apart,”³⁶ what is remarkable about this tale is that it would be utterly *unremarkable* to late antique Christian readers. First and foremost, it is structured according to the classic pattern of *inventio-translatio-depositio* found in almost all sacred grave traditions. Like the accounts of the finding of the cross or the remains of Saint Stephen, dreams and portents often accompany the discovery and translation of the relics. Even in the earliest documented *inventio*, that of Saint James and his companions in Jerusalem in 351, a hermit called Epiphanius had a dream in which Saint James revealed to him his place of burial.³⁷ Likewise, Augustine said: “The bodies of the martyrs Protasius and Gervasius, which had long lain concealed and unknown, were now made known to the bishop Ambrose in a dream, and discovered by him. By virtue of these remains the darkness of that blind man was scattered, and he saw the light of day.”³⁸ So, too, Sozomen relates that the empress Pulcheria (399–453) dreamed that Saint Thyrsos, a third-century martyr, revealed the location of the bones of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, so that “they should be deposited near his tomb, in order that they might share in the same position and honor” (*HE* 2.1, 9.2).

These accounts are full not only of miracles, dreams, and portents that accompany the discovery and translation of the sainted remains but also of armed conflict and body snatching between rival locations.³⁹ For example, Saints Sergius and Bacchus were buried in Resaph, Syria, and “after a great while some religious men from the castle of Souros, prompted by zeal for the service of Christ, but pious in a somewhat piratical way, tried to steal the body from the spot, as if it were some precious treasure.”⁴⁰ The sixth-century historian Evagrius Scholasticus, in his version of the Life of Simeon the Stylite, records that the saint’s body was transferred to Antioch under guard, “lest the inhabitants of the neighboring cities should muster and carry it off” (*HE* 1.13). Evagrius mentions that the body and the hair of Simeon’s head were well preserved, except for some teeth that “had been violently removed by the hands of faithful men.” Our rabbinic tale of *translatio* also records that the flesh of the righteous does not decay after their death. When R. Eliezer’s wife laments, “Woe that this righteous body is for putrification,” her husband responds, “True, I am about to die, but worms will have no power over me.”⁴¹

Leah Di Segni connects these *inventiones* traditions to the consecration of cultic pilgrim sites that function “to focus the Christian cult on potentially non-Christian holy places throughout the land.”⁴² From a different direction, Elchanan Reiner has documented the regional contours of the Galilean cult of holy places in Late Antiquity and how it incorporated the Bible into a local mythology and a new sacred geography common to both the Jewish and Christian communities.⁴³ Along these lines, it seems eminently reasonable to see the R. Eliezer tradition as part of an emerging counter-narrative to reclaim and recolonize the sacred landscape: while the content of this narrative is rabbinic, the language of its expression is not.

In sum, it seems that in this period we are witness to a significant “re-drawing of the map of relations between the dead and the living” in Jewish as well as Christian culture. Robert Markus has suggested that the concept of a Christian Holy Land was enabled by moving from sacred time—the commemoration of the martyrs—to sacred topography by extending the logic of cultic practices associated with the veneration of local martyrs in particular places to sites associated with other elements of Christian and pre-Christian history.⁴⁴ This cultural logic of transference from residual practices to emerging ones could also be applied to Palestinian Judaism, as it moved in reverse from the now-defunct sacred Temple to emergent attitudes toward sacred graves as a means of reappropriating and recolonizing the sacred landscape. In other words, just as Christian discourses transformed the newly acquired Holy Land into a recognizable neighborhood by populating it with familiar faces, so the rabbis created a counter-cartography by populating the land with familiar ghosts from their own past, in an attempt to reclaim it for themselves.

De-Territorialization

Another, almost opposite way to counter an emerging Christian presence in the Holy Land is de-territorialization. We know that among fourth- and fifth-century Christians, pilgrimage was a contested issue, as Gregory of Nyssa said: “When the Lord invites the blessed to their inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, he does not include a pilgrimage to Jerusalem among their good deeds” (*On Pilgrimages*). One could say that criticism of pilgrimage was born with pilgrimage itself.⁴⁵ This is not surprising, considering that one of the most far-reaching transformations in the age of Constantine was the gradual shift from the heavenly Jerusalem to the earthly—from what Jonathan Z. Smith

called a “utopian” mode where, in the words of Origen, “the holy place is the pure soul” (*Hom. Lev.* 13.5), toward a more “locative” mode that was highly receptive to the idea of holy places.⁴⁶ Many factors—theological, political, exegetical, and personal—fueled this debate. Whether the Jews were aware of this conflict or not, it is possible that they could have adopted an approach that diminished the importance of place in encountering the sacred—especially in response to an emerging Christian discourse of holy space.

When some post-Constantine rabbinic texts imagined predestruction Palestine, it was often as a utopian space, as a center with no periphery. Thus the Jerusalem Talmud contains a series of anecdotes wherein, for example, “the daughters of Sepphoris would travel to the Temple for the Sabbath, yet no one would rise to gather figs on Sunday before them, and the daughters of Lod would knead their dough [for the Sabbath], go to Jerusalem, pray, and return even before the dough leavened” (yMS 5.2, 56a). Whether from the North or the South, the powerful cultural presence of this center did not leave room for any margins, as if Jerusalem is everywhere just around the corner. This concept of a utopian space also appears as an eschatological vision that “in the future the gates of Jerusalem will reach as far as Damascus” (*SifreDeut* 1).

These mirabilia set the stage for a more disturbing vision of the post-destruction present, as this collection concludes with the following anecdote: “A man was standing and plowing. His cow broke away from him and started running. He ran after it and it ran, he ran and it ran, until he found himself in Babylonia. They asked him, when did you leave? He answered, today. They asked him, by which way did you come? He answered, by this one. They said, come and show us, and he went out and tried to show them, but he no longer recognized the way he came. As the verse says: ‘He has walled in my ways with hewn stones, he has made my paths a maze’” (*Lam* 3.9).

This post-Constantinian text seems to register a different kind of spatial consciousness, wherein the possession of the land is so ephemeral that the mere blink of an eye separates here from there, place from displacement. We have moved rapidly from a utopian world in which everywhere is in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, to a dystopian vision where the margins have conquered the center, and exile is literally inescapable. In the words of Yeats: “things fall apart, the centre cannot hold.”

Against this background, let us consider the following text from the Palestinian Talmud in the name of R. Tanḥuma, who lived in Palestine around the time of Egeria’s visit:

R. Tanḥuma said: A tale of one (*eḥad*) ship of gentiles that was sailing the Mediterranean, and on it was one (*eḥad*) Jewish youth. A great storm came upon them at sea, and each one took (*natal kol eḥad*) his idol, but it did not help. Once they saw that their cries were of no avail, they said to him, “Jew, why don’t you stand and pray?” He rose and prayed, and the sea was quieted. When the ship reached port, everyone disembarked to purchase his needs (*kol eḥad litoḥ*). They said to the Jewish youth, “Don’t you wish to buy anything?” He said, “What do you want of this poor stranger/wanderer (*akhsanaiya*)?” They said to him, “You are a poor stranger? They are the poor strangers; they are here and their gods are in Babylonia; they are here, and their gods are in Rome. But you, wherever you go, your god is with you.” (As it is written: *for what great nation is there that has a god so close to him as the Lord our God whenever we call upon him* [Deut 4.7]). (yBer 9.1, 13b; MS Vatican 133)

This is a poignant travel narrative about the dislocation of identity and space; but unlike most exemplars of this genre, it actually goes nowhere: it begins on the ship and ends there, with the protagonist refusing to disembark. This microcosmic image of a ship filled with gentiles and one Jewish youth represents more than mere numeric disparity. As the language of the text indicates, this is not only a ship filled with gentiles but “a gentile ship”; there is a feeling here of a deep difference in entitlement and identity.⁴⁷

The refusal of the Jewish youth to go ashore marks him as placeless: for him, there is no difference between home and abroad. Speaking of himself in the third person, he defines himself as a stranger or wanderer (*akhsanaiya*)—a Greek loanword from *ksenos* (Latin, *peregrinus*—the same word that later came to mean pilgrim, as Jerome called Fabiola “a stranger (*peregrine*) in every city”) (*Ep.* 77.8).⁴⁸ He sees himself in a manner similar to what is written of pre-Constantinian Christians who “dwell in their own countries, but only as strangers (*ksene*).”⁴⁹ Echoes of Jonah resonate clearly here, but in an ironic register. While the biblical character tries in vain to flee his territorial God, our protagonist sees himself as spiritually homeless, a religious vagabond. The irony of this post-Constantinian story is that our youth sees himself as a wandering stranger—nowhere at home and never reaching a safe haven. Yet for this very reason, his gentile companion sees him as always at home because wherever he is, his god is close to him. It is their answer, not his, that echoes Jonah.

We can hear similar sentiments expressed by the liturgical poet Yannai, writing in sixth-century Palestine, when he laments: “From our dwellings we have been expelled for our guilt, even in our desolate cities we do not dwell, in a land not our own we are reckoned as strangers.”⁵⁰ As Shulamit Elizur has recently remarked, Yannai is expressing these sentiments of exile as a stranger in his own land while living under Byzantine rule in Palestine, and thus redefining the meaning of exile.⁵¹

Sabine MacCormack has remarked that “the concept of pilgrimage is rooted in the idea that acts of worship are better performed—and salvation attained—in one place rather than another.”⁵² Perhaps this rabbinic narrative is de-territorializing the sacred. This devaluation of space is all the more pointed because the conquering gentile, not the Jew, speaks the truth. The Jew, like his God, has come to embody Foucault’s heterotopia: “outside of all places.”⁵³

This narrative is usually interpreted as a reaction to the destruction of the Temple and subsequent exile. I think, however, that there are more compelling proximate forces at work here than an event which occurred three hundred years earlier. For this late fourth-century rabbi, these feelings of being a stranger even while at home are also being fed by much more recent events and circumstances. The overriding sentiment is that “the God who made the world and all things in it does not dwell in temples made with hands. . . . He is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17.24, 28). Ironically, our narrator could well agree with Gregory, that “a change of place does not bring one closer to God, but there where you are, God will come toward you” (*Ep.* 2). If pilgrimage, as Jaś Elsner remarked, was “a journey ‘into one’s identity in its topographic, cultural and spiritual resonances,’”⁵⁴ our protagonist’s journey goes nowhere, as his identity has become de-spatialized and de-territorialized.

Relocation

Another strategy of contestation is relocation or displacement. Here, sacred space is not devalued but rather moved elsewhere, just as the fourth-century church moved the religious omphalos to the Holy Sepulchre as the “New Jerusalem,”⁵⁵ as can easily be seen in the Madaba mosaic, where this church is the visual center and the Temple Mount a ghostly absence.

This relocation of the sacred can occur in time, in space, or in both. For example, the destruction of the Temple was a catalyst for those traditions that relocated the sacred Temple vessels to various hidden sites to keep them out

of the hands of the conquerors and await the future redemption.⁵⁶ In this context, the traditions concerning the Mount of Olives—one of the earliest Christian pilgrim sites—are exemplary.⁵⁷ The Christian adoption of this sacred site continues a remarkably developed and variegated tradition in biblical and postbiblical literature concerning its cultic and eschatological significance.⁵⁸ In the early fourth century, Eusebius mentions that Jerusalem's Christians met to pray on the Mount of Olives. Quoting Ezek 11.22–23, which portrays the Divine Glory moving from “the midst of the city till it stood on the mountain east of the city,” he remarks:

And this Mount of Olives is said to be over against Jerusalem, because it was established by God after the fall of Jerusalem, instead of the old earthly Jerusalem and its worship. . . . Which it is possible for us to see literally fulfilled in another way even to-day, since believers in Christ all congregate from all parts of the world, not as of old time because of the glory of Jerusalem, nor that they may worship in the ancient Temple at Jerusalem, but they rest there that they may learn both about the city being taken and devastated as the prophets foretold, and that they may worship at the Mount of Olives opposite to the city, whither the glory of the Lord migrated when it left the former city. (Eusebius, *DE* 6.18)

This new sacred site receives its identity not only from scriptural events but, no less important, from not being the other “earthly Jerusalem.” This is much more than a “clear example of the transfer of a holy place”;⁵⁹ the relocation of Divine Presence and patronship is reenacted as a supersessionalist mythologeme in the ritual behavior of the pilgrims who imitate the “glory of the Lord,” as their own trajectory moves from the old to the new.

By the fourth century, the complex on the Mount of Olives had become one of the most theologically crowded of sacred sites. A combination of canonical and apocryphal traditions included not only the divine migration from the Temple to the Mount of Olives (based upon Ezek 11.23 and Zech 14.4). From here, Jesus set out on his messianic adventus to the Temple in Jerusalem (Matt 21.1); here, he transmitted eschatological teachings to his disciples, and from here he ascended to heaven, and to here he will return.⁶⁰

Given the significance of this “Heavenly Gate of Ascension,” as Cyril called it (*Cat.* xiv.23) in Christian tradition, and especially those traditions that the “the glory of the Lord migrated” there from the Temple Mount, it

is reasonable to assume that the rabbis would adopt a commensurate but negative attitude toward this site, particularly after the miraculous vision of 351 reported by Cyril when “there appeared in the skies of Jerusalem a great luminous cross which extended from the hill of Golgotha to the Mount of Olives” (Sozomen, *HE* 4.5),⁶¹ and Poemenia commissioned the Church of Ascension in the 370s. For these reasons, the following tradition is all the more surprising:⁶²

Ten journeys were made by the Divine Presence (*Shekhinah*): from cherub to cherub, from the cherub to the threshold of the house, from the threshold of the house to the cherubim, from the cherubim to the east gate, from the east gate to the Court, from the Court to the altar, from the altar to the roof, from the roof to the wall [to the city], and from the wall to the city, and from the city to the Mount of Olives. . . .

R. Yonatan said: For three and a half years, the *Shekhinah* lingered upon the Mount of Olives, crying out three times a day: *Return, O backsliding children, and I will heal your faithlessness* (Jer 3.22). But when they did not repent, the Presence began to soar heavenward, saying, *I will go and return to my place—till they realize their guilt. In their distress, they will seek me and beg for my favor* (Hos 5.15). (PRK 13.11)

Why would rabbinic tradition record that the *Shekhinah* ascended to heaven from the same site as Jesus? Is this tradition a polemical counternarrative, or a common but independent source? It could well be, as Elchanan Reiner has suggested, that an early Jewish apocalyptic tradition concerning the divine migration and ascension from the Mount of Olives (based upon Ezekiel and Zechariah) underlies both rabbinic and Christian developments.⁶³ It seems that R. Yonatan (early third century) is elaborating upon an earlier anonymous tradition, although one that is impossible to date with any certainty.⁶⁴ The Christian adoption of such a tradition could explain why Jesus’ ascension and return were located specifically at this place, creating a rich analogy between Jesus and the *Shekhinah* and between the destruction and the resurrection.

Whatever the origins of this tradition, its Christian adoption seems to have generated two different rabbinic responses. The first, found in the Mi-drash Tanḥuma, displays a painful awareness of the Christian mythologeme. Commenting on the biblical verse that proscribes the Jews from possessing

even a “foot-hold” in the land of Esau (Deut 2.5), the midrash says that this prohibition is limited only “until his feet shall stand on that day,” a clear echo of Zech 14.4 (“On that day, he will set his feet on the Mount of Olives”). This text continues: “The Holy One said, in this world you have no authority (or permission) for this mountain, but in the future you will be redeemed and inherit it.”⁶⁵ In an ironic twist, not only has the Mount of Olives in the heart of Jerusalem become “the land of Esau,” but it will return to Jewish possession only when the Messiah returns to this place.

A different approach to this “voluntary” disenfranchisement can be seen in an emendation of the tradition. The parallel versions found in Avot of R. Natan (34A) and in the Babylonian Talmud (bRH 31a) displace the final station of the Divine Presence from the Mount of Olives to the desert (citing Prov 21.19), and only from there did it ascend to the heavens.⁶⁶ This emendation and its unflattering proof-text (“It is better to live in the desert than with a contentious, vexatious wife”) seem to be generated by a polemical desire to downplay the importance of the Mount of Olives by creating a neutral counter-cartography.

In fact, rabbinic literature knows of three separate traditions concerning the divine migration after the destruction of the Temple. The first, and most likely earliest, appears in the Mekhilta and states that “everywhere that Israel was exiled to [Egypt, Babylon, Ilam, Edom], the Presence was exiled with them.”⁶⁷ The second tradition is the one just cited from the Pesikta de-Rav Kahana, which acquires a counter-text that displaces the Mount of Olives for the desert. The third, and redactionally latest, tradition appears in the Midrash Tanḥuma and—in distinction from the two earlier traditions, which both posit an itinerant Divine Presence—states that, despite the destruction, the Divine Presence never moved from the Temple Mount.⁶⁸ Although the nature of rabbinic literature makes it difficult delineate with any certainty a relational chronology for these traditions (and nothing necessitates seeing them sequentially), I suggest that this last and redactionally latest text of divine immobility, that “the Divine Presence never moved from its place,” was formed in a contentious dialogue with the Christian traditions. This would be an appropriate response to Jerome, who said that “while the banner of his Cross shines forth from the Mount of Olives, those miserable people groan over the ruins of their Temple.”⁶⁹ In what seems to be an explicit negation of the Christian traditions, the version found in Lieberman’s DeutR (43) emphasizes that “when the Holy One will return, it will only be from *this place*; as it is written, “Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord, for he is roused from his holy habitation” (Zech 2.17).⁷⁰

Seeing, Reading, and Believing

The last modes of contestation I want to mention are as suggestive as they are speculative; but before I give them a name, let's return for a moment to Egeria. Her travelogue exemplifies how a pilgrimage to the Holy Land was always textual, "a pilgrimage to the Land of the Text." For her and her fellow travelers, observed Ora Limor, "sacred space is a text, to be interpreted and deciphered, just like the Holy Scriptures and in parallel to them."⁷¹

This textual aspect of pilgrimage is pre-Constantinian: in the mid-second century, Melito and others traveled to Palestine to see "the places where [these things] were preached and done."⁷² In the fourth and fifth centuries, this scholastic curiosity yields to a more tactile yearning to see what Egeria calls "the places of my desire (*loca desiderata*, 10.7). This desire "to see everything that the Books of Moses tell us" (Egeria 5.8) was born out of an intense longing to participate in the sacred moments from the biblical past and was one of the driving forces of sacred travel. As Paulinus of Nola said: "No other sentiment draws men to Jerusalem but the desire to see and touch" (*Ep.* 49.14; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* 13.22). This new epistemology is ritualized by Egeria as she constantly joins holy site with the appropriate passages from the holy text ("Indeed, whenever we arrived, I always wanted the Bible passages to be read to us" [4.3; 10.7]).

What is significantly and even radically new here is the function of physical sight in Christian belief and the function of place in joining the ocular and the textual: of site, sight, and citation.⁷³ Peter Walker has linked this "material turn" in Christian discourse of the fourth century to emerging theories of the Incarnation,⁷⁴ and Georgia Frank has explicitly connected this new type of visceral seeing to the pilgrim travel narratives where "the 'eye of faith' signals a vivid perception of a past biblical event that is triggered by seeing the physical holy place. One might refer to these visualizing moments as 'biblical realism,' by which I mean instances when the viewer claims to become an eyewitness to a biblical event."⁷⁵ This powerful link between sacred text and sacred land magically erased the boundaries of time and enabled the pilgrim to close the gap between past and present, as can be heard in the astonishment of Jerome: "As often as we enter [the Lord's sepulcher], we *see* the Savior in his grave clothes, and if we linger we *see* again the angel sitting at his feet and the napkin folded at his head" (*Ep.* 46:5, 13).

This new epistemology that joined the ocular and the textual had a

number of important ramifications.⁷⁶ First, as in pre-Constantinian pilgrimages, the vision of the land became a hermeneutical tool. Just as Pausanias travels with Homer in hand, so Jerome said that “he who has contemplated Judaea with his own eyes . . . will gaze more clearly upon Holy Scripture.”⁷⁷ Moreover, the colonial/textual gaze of these pilgrims enabled them to usurp Jewish places and spaces—and, as Andrew Jacobs has shown, even the Jews became textualized into the Christian past—thereby transforming the biblical past into a confessional present.⁷⁸

This powerful link between sacred text and sacred land not only enabled the pilgrim to close the experiential gap between past and present or aid in the antiquarian understanding of an ancient text; the sight of the places of the biblical events attested to their veracity—to see was to believe.⁷⁹ “Just as the text justified the interpretation of any one site as worth visiting, so the site provided material proof of the actual setting and context of any particular scriptural event.”⁸⁰ As Eusebius says of the discovery of the *Martyrion*: “After its descent into darkness, it came forth again to the light, and it enabled those who came as visitors to see plainly the story of the wonders wrought there, testifying by facts louder than any voice to the resurrection of the Savior” (Eusebius, *VC* 3.28).⁸¹

I would like to connect this economy of sight and citation—the desire to see and to touch the sacred past through the sacred text that so motivated the early pilgrims—to another rabbinic text that appears in the *Pesikta*:⁸²

R. Yoḥanan was sitting in the great synagogue of Sepphoris, and expounding: “In the future, the Holy One will construct the eastern gate of the Temple and its two windows out of one pearl. There was a heretic sailor in the audience, who said: “Why, you even can’t find a pearl as large as a dove’s egg, and this one sits and talks like this!” Sometime afterward, he was sailing upon the Great Sea, and his ship sank, and he descended to the bottom of the sea, where he saw the ministering angels hollowing, shaping, and carving designs in an object. He asked them: “What’s that?” They replied: “It is the eastern gate of the Temple with its two windows being made out of one pearl.” Forthwith, he escaped miraculously, and a year later he returned and found R. Yoḥanan sitting and expounding the same passage saying: “In the future, the Holy One will hollow the east gate of the Temple with its two windows out of one pearl.” He said: “Old man, old man, all that you have to tell us, tell, and whatever

you can glorify, glorify. If I had not seen it with my own eyes, I would never have believed it.” R. Yoḥanan said: “Had your eyes not seen it, you would not have believed what I was saying in my instruction in Torah?!” Thereupon, R. Yoḥanan looked at the man, and in that instant he became a heap of bones. (PRK 18.5.)

R. Yoḥanan is sitting and expounding in the synagogue of Sepphoris upon the eschatological verses from Isaiah 54 when a seafaring heretic mocks him.⁸³ While we do not know the specific occasion of this event, it may not be coincidental that these verses were the lectionary reading in synagogues for the “third Sabbath of Consolation” after the Ninth of Av, marking the destruction of the Temple.⁸⁴

Our seafaring heretic sounds much like doubting Thomas, who said, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the place of the nails, I will not believe” (John 20.25). And R. Yoḥanan’s retort resembles that of Jesus: “Because you have seen me, you have believed? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed.” Marc Hirshman has connected this narrative to anti-Christian polemic concerning the continued importance of the Temple.⁸⁵ Following his lead, I suggest that we can see in this tale yet another way to reconfigure sacred time, space, and text. Like the early pilgrims who used the text to touch the sacred past, R. Yoḥanan uses the text to catch a glimpse of the eschatological future.⁸⁶ Beyond the different directions of time travel (not insignificant in itself), Yoḥanan says, contra Jerome and the seafaring heretic, that one does not have to actually see in order to believe. It is not the present reality of the Holy Land that is the lens for understanding the text from the past but rather the sacred text itself that enables one to glimpse the promised future.

It has been said that for Egeria, “present and past have merged into a single experience.”⁸⁷ She stands simultaneously in two worlds and moves through two time periods: the present of the late fourth-century eastern Roman Empire; and the biblical past. R. Yoḥanan is also a time traveler with a foot in two worlds. However, for him and his audience, the present is not a triumphant fulfillment of a past text. The tragic gap between the signifier (text) and the signified (reality) brings him to use the text from the past to transport his audience to the utopian future, as textual travel enables the sage to visit “the places of his desire.” Thus, if Bitton-Ashkelony has remarked that Syriac hagiography portrayed “sacred travel as a necessity in shaping the identity of saints,”⁸⁸ the rabbis supplanted sacred space with sacred text and proposed textual travel of the midrashic imagination as a means for fashioning a resistant

Jewish identity. Only in the eschatological future will site, sight, and citation be truly reunited. For now, the measure of reality and authority is not to be found in what the traveler can see and touch. Rather, it is the eyes of the sage, as he gazes upon the holy text that is the measure of all things.

Seeing the Unbelievable

There is an additional aspect of the ocular and textual in this text and in the pilgrim travelogues—not, however, of seeing the text or the land but of seeing the unseeable. In listing the major tropes that give expression to the experience of sacred travel, Georgia Frank gave precedence to distance, marvel, and the sacred past.⁸⁹ Just as these three aspects appear in the homily of R. Yoḥanan, so, too, as Egeria is guided through the Sinai region, she sees the burning bush “still alive and sprouting,” and at Mount Nevo, she actually saw “where Moses was buried by the angels” (Egeria 4.7, 12.2; trans. Wilkinson). I suppose that we have to accept this credulity at face value and part of the generic conventions of ancient travel discourse. Pausanias also sees the clay stones “out of which the whole race of mankind was fashioned by Prometheus” (*Guide to Greece*, 10.4.3). Likewise, the Babylonian Talmud (bBer 54a) singles out such sites as “the stone that Og wanted to throw at Israel, the stone upon which Moses sat, and the pillar of salt that was Lot’s wife” for the recital of special blessings.⁹⁰ Even Josephus says, “I have seen [this pillar of salt], and it remains till this day” (*Ant.* 3.299).⁹¹ All these sites appear in the various pilgrim itineraries and, I suppose, reflect local traditions.

It is not difficult for us moderns to sympathize with the seafaring heretic concerning this credulity of the pilgrims. While we may think that these motifs lessen the veracity of the traveler’s accounts, we have to remember that the Christian travelogues combined the desire to see and touch the sacred with the Hellenistic literary traditions of the marvels of distant lands called paradoxography.⁹² As François Hartog said of Herodotus: “Any traveler’s tale that claims to be a faithful report must contain a category of *thoma* (marvels, curiosities).”⁹³ It is the marvelous (*miracula*), as Jerome says, that “verified things of which I had previously learned by report” (*Apol.* 3.22).

One tension inherent in this genre is precisely this need to negotiate between the familiar and the remarkable, the known and the unknown. It is this exoticism of the Other that paradoxically connects site with citation yet also ensures that the other stayed Other, for “a distant place without marvels is not so distant after all.”⁹⁴ A delicate balance must be fashioned here. “The Other

must be made comprehensible, and yet making sure that it is Other enough to continue generating the attraction of the foreign, to continue to defy total domestication.”⁹⁵ If the marvelous were to overwhelm the viewer, the veracity of the narrator could be undermined. It is this aspect of travel discourse that was so wonderfully parodied in *A True Story* (1.2–3), by Lucian, who prided himself on the fact that he at least is truthful in admitting that he is a liar.

Another well-known moment of the marvelous is recorded in the travelogue of the sixth-century Pilgrim of Piacenza, when he relates that in the synagogue of Nazareth, “there is a bench on which Jesus sat. . . . Christians can lift the bench and move it, but the Jews are completely unable to do so” (*Pilgrim of Piacenza* 5; trans. Wilkinson). Jacobs has insightfully remarked that “as far as the Piacenza pilgrim is concerned, the Christian visitors are appropriating Jewish space for their own delight and pious amusement.”⁹⁶ But let us return to the hidden transcript of the palimpsest, to “the discourse that takes place offstage,” and try to imagine what happened in that synagogue in Nazareth, after this piece of street theater ended and these biblical tourists had purchased their souvenirs and piled back onto their donkeys. What tales did the natives tell for their own delight and pious amusement? Could they have used the marvelous not to conjoin site and citation, but rather to estrange them from each other, in a “critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant”?⁹⁷

In light of this question, I would like to take a look at two final texts:

The imperial house once sent two commissioners with the orders ‘Go and find the tomb of Moses.’ They climbed up above and saw it below, but when they went down below, they saw it up above them. They then split up, half of them going up and half going down, but those above saw it below, while those below saw it above. Hence Scripture says: “And no man knows of his burial place to this day.” (Deut 34.6) (SifreDeut 357; bSot 13b)

This tale is a remarkable piece of comic burlesque, and although it is intriguing that the interested parties are connected to the imperial house, the reasons for their interest are not clear. It is tempting to see the target of this quip in those pilgrims who, like Egeria, or even Helena, “avidly visited all the places . . . which bore the marks of God’s presence,”⁹⁸ and traipsed around Palestine in a futile quest to discover the hidden biblical past that, according to our author, endlessly slips away from them. The fact that this text first appears in a rabbinic collection dated to the mid-third century makes this reading unfeasible.

It could, however, be directed at Graeco-Roman antiquarianism and memorialization (itself an expression of empire, which preceded and perhaps informed Christian Roman imperial perceptions and uses of space)⁹⁹ or equally, at those pedantic pilgrims and biblical tourists, such as Melito of Sardis (190 CE), Alexander of Cappadocia (213 CE), and Origen (230 CE), who, out of intellectual and religious curiosity, traveled the byways of Palestine with Bible in hand.

Be that as it may, once again a later midrashic hand modified this tradition for its own polemical purposes and appended the following: “And why was his tomb hidden? So that Israel would not go and build a temple and sacrifice there and so that the Nations would not render it impure with their idols and abominations” (*Pesikta Zutrata* 68a).¹⁰⁰ Another very late midrash transfers this tale to Hadrian, who “traveled in all of Palestine looking for the tombs of kings and prophets” (*Midrash Eser Galuyot* 6). After finding the tombs of Joshua and David, he turns to Moav and searches for Moses’ grave. Here appears our narrative of the slippery tomb, and Hadrian’s failure to locate the holy site concludes with the death of the soldiers by exhaustion. In these texts, we could say that the marvelous works to sever the connection between sight and citation. I would suggest that the later reworking of this comic vignette could be viewed as an oppositional reading to the perspective represented by the Pilgrim of Piacenza. There, the marvelous endorses Christian triumphalism, and here it undermines it, as the imperial questers become a farcical enactment of the verse addressed to Moses upon his death: “You may see the land from a distance—but you shall not go there” (Deut 32.52).

As Lucian knew so well, there is something unsettling in this component of the marvelous; it is a kind of wild card that can be played for various ends. It provides the sacred traveler with a touch of the divine, its very incongruity testifying to the veracity of Scripture. Yet if exaggerated, it could, as in the previous text, undermine and disrupt the economy of the ocular and the textual by ensuring that they do not meet. Suppose that we had a tale of a rabbinic traveler who visits the same places as Egeria did. His mysterious local guide shows him various sites from the biblical past: he sees Mount Sinai and the bodies of the Dead of the Wilderness and hears Korah proclaim from the burning pit, “Moses and his Torah are true, and we are deceivers.” When our rabbi tries to touch the sacred and take home a souvenir, or perhaps a relic, he gets stuck in this ghostly landscape of the past and cannot move.¹⁰¹ At each encounter with the biblical past, he acts inappropriately; finally, upon returning to the study house at the end of his voyages, his fellow rabbis call him a fool and an ass. These tales have the signature combination of sacred travel writing:

marvel, distance, and the Bible. Yet they are the accounts of the infamous rabbinic traveler Rabbah bar bar Hana, which appear in a well-known collection of rabbinic paradoxography (bBB 73b–74a).¹⁰² While this rabbinic “Book of Marvels” à la Phlegon as a whole shows obvious Sasanian influences in language and themes, it comprises a number of independent subsections with Palestinian parallels.¹⁰³ It is worth considering that this text, like the previous one, is a Lucian-like parody of the gullible pilgrims and their triumphant remapping of the Holy Land.¹⁰⁴ By reconfiguring the pious travel narrative into the genre of marvelous paradoxography, perhaps we have a parody of the pilgrim’s desire to touch and grasp a piece of the biblical past.

Conclusion

We have considered a variety of texts, from appropriation and imitation to negotiated opposition and parody. Whether new concepts of holy graves and relics or new epistemologies of sight, site, and citation, all bear witness to how the three components of late antique Christian piety—holy places, people, and objects—have infiltrated and begun to take up residence in the rabbinic social imaginary. Taken together, they can be read as manifestations of a rabbinic *scriptio inferior* to the Christianization of Palestine. Yet at least some of these traditions emerge from the palimpsestic shadows to assume a more forthright expression only in the later postclassical strata of rabbinic literature.

“Space,” as Robert Wilken has said, “is never ideologically neutral.”¹⁰⁵ Just as every voyage involves a negotiation between places and identities, so travel writing can turn out to be a potentially empowering practice of difference. Travel narratives allow a culture to see things differently.¹⁰⁶ As late antique Palestine was transformed into a contact zone of competing landscapes and “places became sacred as the past became localized in the present,”¹⁰⁷ the Christian travel narrative joined the fervor of faith with the power of empire to reshape the Holy Land. “We could not have empire itself,” as Edward Said remarked, concerning a later period, “without important imaginative processes at work in the production as well as the acquisition, subordination, and settlement of space.”¹⁰⁸ In this new Christian map, the rabbis had to find a way to create a counter-cartography and fashion a room of their own. Just as the Christian pilgrims utilized travel writing to create a new map of empire, this same genre became, in the hands of the rabbis, a means for fashioning a resistant Jewish identity.

CHAPTER 6

Between Gaza and Minorca: The (Un)Making of Minorities in Late Antiquity

HAGITH SIVAN

Mediterranean Detours: Tying the “Edges of the World”

Christianity generated new sites of the articulation of the boundary between the self-styled majority (the new Christian commonwealth) and its minorities, be they pagans, Jews, barbarians, heretics, or Samaritans. The process of domesticating a newly empowered creed involved the neutralization of other creeds and of other people.¹ To graft its rituals over the rich panoply of paganism and Judaism, late ancient Christianity spawned a political discourse that set minorities apart from the rest of humanity. The vision of a universal-imperial Christianity entailed the vanquishing, or at least the silencing, of the bearers of difference.

Heterogeneity, the hallmark of Roman history, could not be suppressed overnight, even by law. Groups targeted by imperial legislation—including temple priests, whose livelihood and functioning depended on state subsidies; Jewish households and businesses that relied on slave labor; Manichees, whose effective missionary work required both a public forum and private assemblies; and many others singled out as religiously objectionable—often acted in ways that reinforced or reenacted the negative formulation.² A few expired in the process. Pursuing uniformity and orthodoxy, state and church (or rather, emperors and catholic ecclesiastics) “combined to deny the subjects of the Roman empire an alternative to their own opinion in religious matters.”³

In this study, I focus on texts that enable readers to move between two

dynamics that define the emergence of Christian hegemony: the making of minorities and the unmaking of minorities. How do these texts untangle a profusion of rival identities and origins? Can they provide avenues that go beyond a simple opposition between past and present, majority and minority, positive and negative, center and periphery, male and female?

My points of reference are the city of Gaza (*Palaestina Prima*) and the island of Minorca (*Insulae Baleares; Hispaniae*) at the dawn of the fifth century. In each of these territories, an enterprising bishop—newly appointed, an outsider, and heading a tiny flock of believers—embarks on a campaign to eradicate a group designated as numerous and powerful. At Gaza, Bishop Porphyry, an erstwhile guardian of the cross in Jerusalem, aspires to turn the scales in a city known for its paganism. To demolish centers of pagan worship and to convert the Gazans, Porphyry enlisted his metropolitan bishop in Caesarea and, more significantly, of the imperial court.

The ubiquity and the centrality of the court in the narrative of the attempted Christianization of Gaza highlight the court's absence from the narrative relating to the conversion of the Jews on Minorca. The incentive to launch the conversion campaign on Minorca is ascribed to the arrival of the bones of Saint Stephen, the protomartyr, from Palestine to the island. Despite saintly auspices, the actions of Bishop Severus remain open to a strong suspicion of illegality. Neither the relative remoteness of Minorca from the Ravenna court nor the bishop's blithe assertion of the wider viability of his *modus operandi* accounts for imperial indifference. More likely, Severus took advantage of the marginality of Minorca in the matters that fully occupied Honorius's government in the late 410s.⁴

The two episodes under investigation pose questions about the cohesive quality that Christianity engendered in Late Antiquity and about the ways in which the newly adopted imperial creed carved out a civic space in a crowded landscape. Do the cases and texts here investigated point to the inevitability of conflict, dooming cities to be divided along religious lines and regrouped along creedal constituencies? In the final analysis, do these texts invoke a new "law" of participation, begetting new notions of affinity and affiliation with all that was "Roman"?

Palestinian Gaza: Provincializing Christianity and Figuring Eponymity

Gleaned from physical remains, imperial laws, and occasional references in literary sources, the faces of urbanism around the Mediterranean bear the linements of a violent erasure of traditional civic identity.⁵ Gaza provides the observer with the one complete, albeit controversial, narrative that presents the deeds and the debates, the ideology and the rhetoric of one such deletion.⁶ A lengthy biography of Porphyry, bishop of Gaza in the early years of the fifth century, composed by his devoted disciple and follower Mark, recounts the campaigns that Porphyry launched to convert the pagans, public opinion, and even the topography of the city. Despite several glaring inaccuracies, such as the absence of external references to Porphyry and his Gazan tenure, echoes of social and political realities lurk behind Mark's ornate narrative—not the least of which is the crucial role assigned to imperial decrees in fomenting local discord.

Porphyry's appearance in Gaza demonstrates the difficulties entailed in campaigns intended to change the balance of power and faith in an urban center drenched in its own civic traditions.⁷ In anticipation of the ultimate victory of Christianity, Mark's rhetoric presents the Christian minority as a much harassed group and the pagans as a needlessly aggressive majority. Mark's account tells us that even before reaching Gaza for the first time as its newly "elected" bishop, Porphyry was harassed by pagan villagers, members of the rural communities in Gaza's hinterland.⁸ The stage was thus set for a competitive mode of communication. Statistics provided by the narrator illustrate the meager number of pagans who joined the Christian group in Gaza in the wake of a few well-timed miracles. One turning point involved a ceremonial and well-publicized procession ending in a downpour of much-needed rain; another called for saving the life of a noble pagan woman in labor, whose midwife, a Christian, appealed to Porphyry for help (*VP* 19–21, 28–31).

A stranger to Gaza—indeed, to Palestine—yet versed in the affairs of the Jerusalem church, Porphyry was shrewdly aware of the workings of a city. His arrival coincided with a drought—heralding, according to many, a congenital link between the bishop and bad luck for the city (*VP* 19). A series of operations that included processions and prayers failed, however, to propitiate Marnas, Gaza's chief divinity. Reluctantly, Porphyry agreed to step into the breach. Much seemed at stake: a failure could be the undoing of the bishop and congregation, not to mention of Christianity itself.

To rally his followers (at that point, numbering 204), Porphyry staged a showy reaction, counteracting the ceremonies enacted for Marnas with rituals that echoed celebratory feasts in contemporary Christian Jerusalem.⁹ He proclaimed a communal fast, enjoined a night vigil in one church with prayers, singing, and reading, and headed a procession throughout the city to another church, concluding the march at the martyrrium honoring Timotheus outside the walls (*VP* 20). By morning, the Christian party found itself shut out and the gates locked. Groans and tears followed, ending in torrential rain. A happy end, at least for act one. In the guise of this factual presentation, the text expresses the deep ambiguity inherent in procedures of civic religiosity institutionalized in paganism yet used to promote Christianity. Although each performance was anchored in traditions stemming from distinct urban and religious affiliations, the search for reconciliation of city with Christianity blurred such distinctions. In a state of affairs that affected the entire economy and the whole community, creedal ceremonies, rigorously codified, had also become flexible. A number of Gazans (137 in total) acknowledged that much when they joined Porphyry's congregation after "Christ" won this battle over Marnas.

Subsequent events demonstrated the fragility of the balance that the rain war had induced. To accomplish his goals, Porphyry had to enlist the support of the imperial court. The appeal to the highest authority of the land was a strategy favored by Porphyry's patron, John of Jerusalem.¹⁰ With the help of his metropolitan and several influential figures in Constantinople, Porphyry obtained—not without significant difficulties and the signal assistance of the empress Eudoxia—an imperial decree that endorsed the demolition of pagan sanctuaries in Gaza and the assistance of military units to execute the writ.¹¹

His return from Constantinople to Gaza was met by the destruction of a statue of a naked Aphrodite that had presided over Gaza's main intersection for centuries (*VP* 59). Apparently, at the mere sight of the cross, the demon that had inhabited the statue fled, causing Aphrodite to fall and break into many pieces. Both location and divinity proved prophetic. The dethroning of the goddess of love from the city's topography signaled the conversion of thirty-nine individuals, thirty-two men who had been, it seems, deceived by the goddess's promise of marital harmony, and seven women whom the goddess had, perhaps, failed to assist. Aphrodite was the first divinity to cede its place to Christ and to create space for the emergence of a Christianized urban topography.

After the fall of Aphrodite, the imperial army arrived. A mass departure of

pagans followed, their empty homes promptly appropriated to billet soldiers. The imperial letter condemning Gaza's temples that Porphyry had obtained at the court was read in public, prompting loud protest throughout the ranks of pagans and raising cheers of Christian bystanders. The noise must have been considerable, especially with the added din of the clubbing that the soldiers administered to protesters. In ten days, members of the tiny Christian community, together with the soldiers, demolished seven temples. It took a bit longer to figure out how to destroy the Marneion, Gaza's central sanctuary. The campaign of destruction was accompanied by house searches for domestic idols and books of witchcraft. More souls converted.

Once the decision was taken to build a church atop the Marneion and an architect (an Antiochene) was chosen, the clearing of the debris is depicted as a collective enterprise, in which everyone, regardless of gender and age, participated (*VP* 78). When building materials were gathered, the congregation, clergy, and layfolk, with prayers and psalm singing, followed the bishop's example, carrying stones to the designated foundations (*VP* 79). Nor was a miracle lacking as three boys stumbled into a well within the enclosure, only to be found unharmed, each with a sign of the cross on his body.¹² Pace and enthusiasm were maintained, not least because Porphyry paid the laborers timely bonuses, accounting for this generosity (*philotimoumemos*) with a revealing statement: "It is an expedient measure lest a curse rather than a blessing (*eulogia*) descends on the entire undertaking of construction" (*VP* 83).¹³

Such fear of potential disaster vividly recalled the abortive attempt under Julian to rebuild the Jerusalem Temple. One version of this famed episode, narrated by Sozomen, who hailed from Gaza, (erroneously) presented the Temple venture as a communal endeavor in which everyone—women and men alike—zealously shared: "[The Jews] sought the most skillful artisans, collected materials, cleared the ground, and entered so earnestly upon the task that even the women carried heaps of earth, and brought their necklaces and other female ornaments towards defraying the expense. . . . [W]hen they had removed the ruins of the former building, they dug up the ground and cleared away its foundation" (Sozomen, *HE* 5.22; trans. NPNF).¹⁴ A series of prodigies followed, including an earthquake and a fire; to top it all, a sign of the cross appeared simultaneously on the garments of the people engaged in the undertaking.

Porphyry clothed the erection of his church atop the destroyed temple to Marnas as a Gazan version of Solomon's Temple and Constantine's Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a vision that staked a claim to authentic membership

in the Bible as well as in contemporary Jerusalemite liturgy. He dedicated the church, after five years of work, on the eighth day of Easter (*VP* 92), precisely when the church of Jerusalem, of which Porphyry had been a member, celebrated the Encaenia: the feast of the dedication of Constantine's church and the invention of the cross. According to Egeria (early 380s), the Encaenia was a feast "of special magnificence, since it is on the very date when the cross of the Lord was discovered" (48; trans. Wilkinson).¹⁵ Barring an unlikely discovery of a morsel of the true cross in Gaza's deep terrain, the story of the three youths in the well and their miraculous crosses formed an effective parallel.

In this manner, Porphyry inserted himself into the heart of the city, appropriating an integral part of its topography. The discrepancy between the number of parishioners that so many miracles had failed to increase significantly, and the imposing size of the imperially endowed church, had been noted even by Porphyry's own flock (*VP* 66). According to Mark's arrangement—or rather, rearrangement—of the biography, the dedication of the church, celebrated with exceptional pomp and ceremony, was attended by a thousand monks, in addition to clergy, bishops, laity, and numerous curious bystanders. Was there also a dedicatory inscription like the one erected at Zoar a century later to commemorate the dedication of a church to Saint George? "God has his dwelling where there was once a hostel of demons. Redeeming light now shines where once darkness spread its veil. Where once sacrifices were made to idols, angels now dance."¹⁶

One would think that, as Porphyry's biography announced, "when the Marneion was wholly burned, the city was set in order" (*VP* 75; trans. Hill). All temples had been destroyed. Instead of the temple to Marnas, a large church, funded by the empress, arose. It seems that the vast majority of Gaza's pagans had a change of heart—or rather, of creed.

Yet the story does not end happily here. Rather, the biography concludes with two remarkable episodes, both featuring women.¹⁷ Neither gender nor the nature of their encounter with Porphyry or the way in which Mark presented the women was haphazard. In hindsight, they proved formative of the ways in which differences were assimilated in Gaza.

The first occurred when Julia, a Manichee "elect," came to Gaza, where she scored sufficient success to induce anxiety and anger.¹⁸ Challenged by Porphyry to cease her missionary activities and renounce her faith, Julia responded in kind: "Speak and hear, and either persuade or be persuaded" (*VP* 87; trans. Hill). Porphyry consented to a public debate. He prepared himself with fasting and prayers and arrived at the debate accompanied by clergy and

laymen. Julia came with two men and two women, young, fair, and pale. The debate lasted a long time, with Porphyry displaying “the wisdom that God gave him” and Julia, the “magician and marvel-monger,” expounding “old wives’ fables” (*VP* 88; trans. Hill). The occasion was memorable enough to be carefully recorded by a notary. Nor was Porphyry winning. In frustration, he called on God to smite Julia’s tongue and to muzzle her mouth. Julia had a seizure, lost her speech, and died, unrepentant. Her companions rushed to Porphyry to seek his blessing.

Mark presents the protagonists in contrasting terms: one, a holy man, is bent on retaining the integrity of Gaza’s Christian community; the other, an old woman deluded by demons, sows dissension. Indeed, but for references to Christ, Julia is all but a pagan. Between the suggestion of paganism and Julia’s actual affiliation, Mark blurred reality and fiction to institute Porphyry as a champion of a Christian civic order. Intruders were unwelcome, as had been local and long-entrenched divinities. Aphrodite, now destroyed, had once presided over the city’s main intersection; Julia, now dead, had posed danger to the precarious pagan-Christian balance that had prevailed in Gaza since the demolition of its temples. The debate, however, between bishop and Manichee had been heated; a great deal was at stake. Like Porphyry, Julia was an outsider. Unlike Porphyry, she aimed her missionary zeal at Christians, not pagans. And her success reflected the tenuous hold that Porphyry had over his painstakingly assembled flock. Even those converted to Christianity were susceptible to other versions of individual salvation. The endeavor to manipulate Manichees failed to achieve a decisive realignment. Peace eluded Gaza, and although Porphyry managed to place supporters in the curia, the bulk of the city’s *curiales* apparently continued to adhere to polytheism.

The second remarkable episode: at one point, the city’s *curiales* even went on the attack, sending Porphyry to flee. Jumping from roof to roof, the bishop and his biographer ran into Salphata, a girl of fourteen who hid the two in her attic. Restored to his residence with the help of the imperial army headed by the provincial governor, “terror restored peace and the city was stilled” (*VP* 99). Porphyry expressed his gratitude to the valiant maiden by baptizing her and her grandmother. When the bishop offered his services as a marriage broker, she refused, expressing a preference for a life of consecrated virginity. Under Porphyry’s auspices, the young woman became a model ascetic, followed by many women who aspired to imitate her mode of living (*VP* 102).¹⁹

It would be difficult to exaggerate the place that women occupy in the narration of Porphyry’s attempts to convert Gaza and its denizens. If the first

notable convert is a woman in labor, the last is a pagan who becomes a Christian ascetic. If Porphyry's chief source of help is the pious empress Eudoxia, his chief female rival is Aphrodite. And if the story casts Julia the Manichee as a model of religious and moral depravity, the biographer creates a perfect foil in the image of a young woman who, in spite of familial affiliation with polytheism, emerges as a model of a proto-believer, a maiden ready to assist a cleric in need and to be received into the flock.

At the turn of the fifth century, the episcopal road to power in Gaza's urban setting was paved with physical violence and public debates won through the sudden demise of opponents. During his episcopate, Porphyry continued a process of Christianization that had been in full swing in the region decades before his arrival.²⁰ Porphyry's biography depicts a clear formulation of the opposition between pagan and Christian Gaza, creating a wedge between the protagonist's view of the vocation of the city and the threat that pagans posed to this ideal.

Eudoxia, the ascetic maid Salphata, and the noble lady in labor symbolized the discord that Porphyry unleashed to undermine the traditional functioning of a city at peace. Eudoxia had supplied ammunition, the noble lady a local patron, and Salphata the ultimate expression of the glorification of Christianity. For Porphyry, paganism represented the inner ills of the city, a source of stasis that must be repressed. The irony is that even with the suppression of Aphrodite and Marnas, Christian harmony hardly reigned in Gaza, as the appearance of Julia, an outsider, and Porphyry's roof skipping clearly demonstrate.

The planned erasure of paganism and with it the conversion or marginalization of pagans could not be taken for granted. The alienation of divinities and their adherents, meant to reconcile the two halves of the Gazan collectivity, did not banish conflict. Nor did the ascetic Salphata or even the Eudoxiana, the church endowed by the empress, eradicate Aphrodite or the Gazan taste for rhetoric and public debate.²¹

Minorca: Insularity and Autochthony

Around the turn of the fifth century, while Porphyry was engaged in disentangling paganism from Gaza, a young boy and an older man, both from remote Spanish Gallaecia, arrived in the Holy Land. The man, Avitus of Braga, never returned home. Years later, the boy, Hydatius, who had become a bishop of

a Gallaecian town and a recorder of his country's tortured history, vividly recalled meeting two of the great men of the era in Palestine: Jerome of Bethlehem and John of Jerusalem (ca. 406/7, *Chron.* 12–14).²² As a starting point for his own chronicle, Hydatius positioned himself as a continuator of Jerome (and Eusebius). He also repeatedly paid tribute to John, of whose bitter rivalry with Jerome he seemed unaware.

For 415 CE, Hydatius recorded the discovery, during John's episcopate, of the body of Saint Stephen, the Protomartyr (*Chron.* 20). Of John's centrality in the discovery, he seems unaware or uninterested. Of the arrival of Stephen's relics to Spain through the services of another Spaniard, the priest Orosius, Hydatius passed over in silence. Nor did he remark on the instrumental role of his erstwhile copatriot and copilgrim, Avitus of Braga, in dispatching the relics to Spain together with his own Latin translation of the narrative of their discovery.²³ The unplanned appearance of the relics in a context of communal harmony galvanized a metamorphosis: it generated the decomposition of an ancient Jewish congregation; and it witnessed the appropriation of civic powers by the local clergy and the violent imposition of religious conformity.

We are exceptionally well informed about all these events. Severus, the self-proclaimed protagonist and bishop of Minorcan Jamona, had taken the trouble to record the events minutely, from the deposition of Stephen's relics in Minorcan Magona to the mass conversion of the Jews of Magona.²⁴ In the past, the *Epistula Severi* (*ES*) has been used primarily to highlight the history of a Jewish community under pressure.²⁵ There is no doubt that the *Epistula* can be profitably inserted into a specific chapter of Jewish-Christian relations in Roman Late Antiquity. Thus, the conversion of the Magona synagogue into a church fits into a pattern known from elsewhere in the Mediterranean.²⁶ Yet the appearance, virtually *ex nihilo*, of a well-established Jewish community on an island in the western Mediterranean belonging to a provincial terrain (Spain) that produced barely a handful of Jewish inscriptions in addition to a single and highly contested synagogue (Elche), begs a crucial question.²⁷ Are we doing justice to the *Epistula* by reading it solely as a document of confrontation over sanctuary and souls—over a synagogue and its community of worshippers? How unusual was the Minorcan coerced conversion in a landscape like that of the later Roman empire in the fifth century, where law and local deeds often displayed disjunction, and where bishops, rather than imperial administrators, applied the letter of the law to their community?²⁸

There are other ways of reducing the apparent specificity of the *Epistula Severi*. We can analyze how Severus's campaign bred a strategy of transformation that emphasized both tension and potential reconciliation between invaders and invaded. We can construct the phases that transformed a hostile invader into a legitimate heir and the invasion into an expedition of reconquest. We can follow the process of the reintegration of the island into a new, post-Roman Spain. And we can trace opposing discourses—of town dwellers versus those of the countryside, of “locals” versus “foreigners,” of insular/Mediterranean versus Hispanic, and of orthodoxy versus heterodoxy. What remains striking is the ambiguity of the otherness, when “barbarian,” “Jew,” and “heretic” become means of designating someone who is not “us.” The polarities presented, and what is said about the other, provide a coherent vision of the ideology of citizenship. Along these modalities of reasoning, Minorca may prove less exotic than it first appears—less a case apart but rather an example of a new type of Christian imperialism.

The scene of Severus's activities, the island of Minorca, had the incomparable advantage of being geographically and administratively distinct from the Spanish mainland.²⁹ At the dawn of the fifth century, when Spain was awash with barbarians, the *Epistula Severi* delineates Minorca as a haven of tranquility and communal harmony. Among the refugees from the mainland to reach the safe shores of the island was Consentius, Augustine's correspondent, who lamented the island's lack of Christian intellectuals with whom he might engage in profitable doctrinal discussions.³⁰ Instead, he had to vent his erudition and frustration in essays against heretics and Jews. For two other refugees, Jewish merchants from the Spanish mainland, the Balearics provided only a temporary asylum. Barely two years after reaching Minorca, they and their coreligionists faced a challenge more menacing and ultimately more destructive than that of looting barbarians (*ES* 18).

The narrative of the “miraculous” events that transpired during the course of a single week (in 418), well rehearsed in modern scholarship, begins with a simultaneity: Severus's assumption of the episcopal throne of Minorca and the (unintended) arrival of a relic of Saint Stephen from the Holy Land.³¹ Once instituted as a match “kindling the fire of the Lord's love” (*caritas*; 4.2) and as lending the saint's powerful patronage to the island's Christians (*ES* 6.4), the relics discreetly disappear from the rest of the story as though the partnership between the saint and the bishop was unnecessary or an embarrassment.³² The tactful omission—or, rather, the imbalance between the ever-active Severus and the silent Stephen—suggests that Stephen provided little

beyond a verification that there was a time when it was possible to be borne across the Mediterranean all the way from Jerusalem to Minorcan Iamona.

According to Severus, upon reaching the shores of the island, Stephen's relics launched an episcopal campaign of conversion. Once accomplished, the dramatic reversal of social relations through the grafting of the Jews into Christian Minorca became a subtext for a long didactic letter that contained a deceptively simple message: if so great a miracle can happen on a remote island, it can happen everywhere.

As newly appointed bishop of the town of Jamona, Severus began his anti-Jewish campaign with a march across the island to the town of Magona, where Jews, reportedly a majority there, had settled from time immemorial. From the beginning, Severus speaks in dichotomies: the Christian minority versus the Jewish majority; the weak versus the strong; the meek versus the aggressive; and, above all, himself, an obscure bishop of a tiny community versus the powerful, especially as embodied in Theodorus, the rich and erudite leader of the Jewish community who was also *patronus* and *defensor* of the town.³³ Challenging the Jews to a public debate on the Sabbath, Severus appeared in town armed with followers and weapons, and proceeded to burn down the synagogue, saving only silver and Scriptures. The act of unpredictable violence on so large a scale resulted in the conversion of a single Jew named Reuben, a name that not unnaturally evoked modern suspicions. The rest, however, resisted. Severus focused on Theodorus. The two engaged in a public debate that Theodorus easily won.³⁴ Frustrated, Severus's followers shouted, "Theodorus, believe in Christ" (*credas in Christum*). Jewish bystanders apparently misinterpreted the phrase to mean that Theodorus has believed in Christ (*in Christum credidit*). (One wonders at the level of elementary Latin on the island.) Stunned and shocked, Theodorus submits to conversion, followed by that of 540 coreligionists. Such is the fanciful sequence that the narrative advances, the capitulation of the leading figure of the rival community cast as an irreversible turning point. Whether Theodorus's sudden change of creed was due to public pressure of coreligionists, or to Theodorus's (misplaced) trust in public acclamations of the Christians, is left outside the textual framework.

Three dissenters remained—all women and all socially prominent. One, a daughter of a high Roman official and the wife of a community leader, hides in a cave until a miracle of water turned to honey somehow engineers her return to town and her conversion. The second woman surrenders after Christians occupy her home. The third, a widow, boards a ship (in February!) that quickly capsizes; she returns to accept Christianity. She was the last to resist

conversion, and her ultimate lesson is accompanied by miracles, including the assistance of the ocean, whose ferocious winter waves force the last refugee to return to the island.

Severus's carefully framed narrative begins and ends with women. In the beginning, he positioned a consecrated virgin named Theodora, a name that reflected "the wondrous ordering of the divine dispensation," since it matched that of the leading Jew whose conversion will signal Severus's victory. Theodora had a vision in which a noble widow, interpreted by Severus to symbolize the synagogue, humbly offered him all her fields to sow.³⁵ At the conclusion of the conversion account, Severus presented the conversion of the three Jewish women mentioned above as the ultimate achievement that hails the rebirth of Minorca as a Christian territory.

In the book of Genesis, the creation of woman is indissociable from that of man. In Severus's account, one state of women, virginity, is reserved for Christians. Two other states, marriage and widowhood, are allocated to Jewish women. A Christian virgin is credited with a dream that depicts an obnoxious widow. The Jewish women foment dissension not only between two communities but also in their own household by resisting their husbands' wishes and by insisting on an independent course of action. They further impair the staging of conversion. When the last resisting woman is forced back to the coast after her boat capsizes, she allegedly tearfully begs Severus on her knees to convert her. "Why, woman," he said, "did you wish to desert your brothers in such foolhardiness?" She replies: "Even the prophet Jonah wished to be free from the countenance of God, only to fulfill, unwillingly, the will of God"—an episode that subverted any notion of conflict and reduced tragedy to irony.

Throughout, Severus's careful recording emphasizes cleansing the island of polluting elements. Severus's politics, all directed toward the same end, are occasions of renewal and reaffirmation of the faith. The fact that women provided the lasting temporal dissonance in this tenor of new civic life suggests that female dissension was highly problematic. As the letter reflects on changes of constitution on the island, Severus aims to construct identity from two distinct angles: male leadership and female resistance.³⁶ Overcoming both constitutes the most current definition of effective politics in that it offered a new model of communal relations and local power structures—public and domestic order restructured.

Female opposition to conversion, condemned to failure by its gender and nature, highlights the misfortunes of one community and the transgressions and crimes of another.³⁷ On the one hand, a well-entrenched group is faced

with sudden and unexpected violence; on the other hand, the resolve of a new bishop to make a name for himself through waging an unprovoked war purposefully creates a memorable work out of the suffering of others. The initial sponsorship of Saint Stephen ensures that the deepest interests of the whole of Christendom, the letter's intended audience, are directly touched.

We do not have the Jewish side of the events. One can only project from the letter how the congregation reacted to the pervasive hatred that Severus manifested. The timing was superb, from Severus's point of view. Spain had been run by barbarian hordes; the sea was closed to navigation; escape seemed remote.³⁸ The Christian glorification of the same events confirmed the profound despair that must have prevailed among the Jews on that remote island. We need to imagine the letter's intended Christian recipients as participants in an ongoing production of similar dramas. These would be women and men who may have discovered in the cries and submission of the defeated enemy something that touched them above and beyond their identity as Romans.

The discourse of forced conversion privileged the Christians of Minorca as the only true citizens of the island. It opposed Jews with Christians, minority with majority, and men with women, as though the social horizons were stretched only along such oppositions. Because women were depicted as more resistant than men to violent and verbal persuasion, they represent the true guardians of the faith. The conversion of women was the ultimate supersession; once removed or forcibly grafted, the problem of two faiths coexisting on a single island disappeared.

Paradoxes of an Inverted World

A comparison of the Minorca and the Gaza narratives provides clues to a new understanding of conversion and the (un)making of minorities in Late Antiquity. Elements such as the convenient absence of a wife who, with maternal approval, would entertain divorce if the husband converted without her agreement (*ES* 21.2)—perhaps a reality, perhaps a literary ruse—or the sudden yet exceedingly well-timed demise of opponents suggest a conflictual reading of marriage in one case; and of a single non-Christian woman in the other. Severus allows the noxious and unnamed mother and daughter to drop out of the narrative; Porphyry is grateful for an answer to a prayer that results in violence against a minority woman. In both instances, the silencing of women is the consummation of a crusade.

The interpretation of such episodes and texts depends on our understanding the goals of their writers—in one case, a bishop whose intent was to spread the message of the usefulness of forced conversion throughout the Christian communities of the Mediterranean; in the other, a deacon whose hero provides a model of religious transformation that transcends the self-imposed limits of the biographical genre. Assigning priority to the bishop as proselytizer, Mark and Severus cast their localities in terms of flagrant imbalances, sharpening the oppositions by annexing women to the narrative. Because both stories aim to provide an exemplary history of converting majorities, they necessarily deploy the protagonist's weapons across various battlefields, from clashes with rival leaders and rival divinities to dispossessing (or empowering) women.

Severus's letter and Porphyry's biography cast their episcopal protagonist as men of war, paradoxically conforming to an ancient, pre-Christian ideal of manhood. The wars they waged were, however, not against external foes but rather over the heart and soul of the city and its citizens. By contrast, womanhood continued to be drawn along specific and limiting behavioral contours. On Minorca, the women who resist conversion are depicted as obnoxious rather than heroic. In Gaza, Aphrodite and Julia, goddess and scholar, likewise resistant to conversion, come to a sudden and, from Porphyry's point of view, justifiably violent end. Religious devotion, by Christian criteria, is deluded when invested in a creed that Severus and Porphyry deem dangerous. The prominence of women of the "other" in both narratives represents the ultimate marginalization of both paganism and Judaism in Late Antiquity. Ultimately, the two narratives imply that Christianity, whether in Palestinian Gaza or Spanish Minorca, was a product of provoked rivalry over who should define affinity with the locale and the empire. When harmony is reestablished by the invading bishops, Jesus emerges as the civic divinity of concord.

In early fifth-century Spain, Consentius, a layman and heresy hunter, recorded with satisfaction for the benefit of Augustine in African Hippo how the bishop of Lerida died soon after his acquittal of heresy by an episcopal council.³⁹ A timely assistance by God, according to Consentius, echoed the Christian call for heavenly intervention when a conflict would have been settled in favor of the Other, be it Theodorus of Minorca (*ES* 16.3) or Julia of Antioch. Consentius—recipient of Augustine's treatise "Against Lying" (*De mendacio*), in which the bishop refused to countenance Consentius's ventures into the land of lying for the good of God and orthodoxy, and an early yet unenthusiastic reader of the *Confessions*—had been instrumental in accusing the bishop of Lerida and his associates of circulating heretical books.⁴⁰ Nor did

Consentius underestimate his intended rival, noting that the accused bishop was mightily conversant with the law (*ius*) and the liberal arts (*liberales litterae*), a strange encomium to a rival (*Ep.* 11*.6).⁴¹ This characterization of the opponent immediately reminds us of Severus's archrival, Theodorus, who is described as exceedingly influential, knowledgeable (*auctoritate atque peritia nitebatur*), rich, universally respected, expert in (Jewish) law (*legis doctor*), and holder of several local and imperial offices (*ES* 6). The emphasis on legal expertise of the wrong kind established a double deviance from the norm: first, by the individual who is, by implication, ignorant or disrespectful of the laws of city and empire; second, with respect to the creed deemed aberrant even in a Roman periphery.

Severus of Minorca and Porphyry of Gaza represent a Christian model of thinking about the bishop's role in the city. Severus alludes to Magona as a city abiding by Roman law (*ES* 12.8: *civitas Romanis legibus subdita*). What law? Roman imperial laws of the period did not endorse episcopal initiatives of destruction of synagogues or temples.⁴² Porphyry allegedly obtained an imperial writ authorizing the closure, but not the demolition, of temples. To become the evangelists of their see, both bishops resorted to creative legal exegesis.

Consentius of Minorca, perhaps Severus's source of literary inspiration if not the shadowy author of the *Epistula* itself,⁴³ hater of Jews, Pelagianists, and Priscillianists, highlights how social status and theological speculation legitimize intervention in state and religious affairs. In a rare moment of shrewd insight, Consentius stumbled on a basic truth: that "the cult of authority invariably carried with it suspicion of the same authority."⁴⁴ He had Origen in mind, condemned while yet alive, and much later, still deserved to be so (*Ep.* 12*). In this, Consentius aligned himself with Jerome and Epiphanius, who opposed the Origenist leanings of John of Jerusalem, authenticator of Stephen's bones, and condemned his support for Pelagius. Whether Consentius directly corresponded with Jerome we know not. The former employs several rare terms, including "heresy" (*cancer*) and "refutation" (*coargutio*), that find a unique parallel in the latter, precisely when dealing with the doctrine of Origen (Jerome, *Ep.* 94.1; 41.4.2).⁴⁵ Porphyry of Gaza had been groomed in John's school of rhetoric in Christianized Jerusalem. Severus of Minorca, a likely associate of Consentius, needed the cache of a Palestinian saint to use similar techniques to reorder Minorca's minorities.⁴⁶

The exceptional nature and standing of the Jewish leader Theodorus of Minorca, Severus's rival, throws into relief the absence of a recognized communal leadership in the Gaza narrative. While Mark carefully lists Gazan gods

and temples, he refers to only two officials by name, Timotheus and Epiphanius, both “guardians of the peace” (*eirenarchontes*) and “chief councillors” (*proteuontes*) (VP 25) and both making a fleeting appearance. For the most part, the battle in Gaza over the soul of the city is waged between a faceless group of “idolmaniacs” and the city’s bishop. Such battle lines suppress the living diversity of the pagan city, supplanting the autochthonous collective by a combined hegemony of Christ, the imperial court, and the local bishop.

Gaza’s depiction as the land of noxious polytheism, Minorca’s recalcitrant Jewesses, and even imperial conservatism in the face of revealed truth, are each central to the triumphal myth of an emergent Christian land. This economics of triumphalism is instrumental in evaluating the rhetorical Jew of Late Antiquity, be it the figure developed by theologians, the polemical partner in religious disputes, or the Jew of imperial legal discourses.⁴⁷ Installed in the city, the bishops of Gaza and Minorca turned it against itself, aiming their fury at stones and at non-Christian society. The narratives of conversion produce new ideologies of citizenship with their own peculiarities and erasures. Otherwise, how was it possible to exclude Jews and others, while using them, needing them as a source of authentication? Herein lies the consistency of the Christian discourse, be it theology or law, vis-à-vis Jews and Judaism in Late Antiquity, a remarkable fact in view of the proliferation of various competing discourses in Late Antiquity.

Christian Historiographers' Reflections on Jewish-Christian Violence in Fifth-Century Alexandria

ODED IRSHAI

The burgeoning violence that marked Christian culture during the fourth century, caused primarily by internal dogmatic strife, has aroused keen scholarly interest in recent years. The efforts of scholars such as Timothy Gregory, Friedhelm Winkelmann, Richard Lim, and, later, Johannes Hahn were essentially focused on describing the phenomenon.¹ Recently, however, the scholarly gaze has shifted to the increasing manifestations of ethnic and interreligious violence from the fourth into the fifth centuries—focusing on what precipitated this great transformation in collective Christian behavior from passive resistance to zealous aggression against heretics and nonbelievers, Jews and pagans alike.²

This essay attempts to explore the historical and historiographical aspects of some extreme examples of interfaith violence in Alexandria in 414 and 415 CE, in the early years of Cyril of Alexandria's episcopacy (elected in 412).³ This exploration is part of a broader study on Jews and Judaism in early Christian historiography, which concentrates predominantly on the Jewish component in the formation of early Christian history. By "Jewish component," I denote the anecdotes or lengthier narratives about Jews integrated into what is a thoroughly Christian portrayal of history. The task is to decipher the distinct constituents, contexts, and modes of the integration of these episodes, in an attempt to understand their bearing on the overall narrative prose that was an

important tool in the molding of the late antique Christian self-image. A Jewish component won pride of place in Eusebius of Caesarea's pioneering historiographical enterprise, the celebrated *Historia Ecclesiastica*.⁴ Still, the presence of narrativized Jews in the treatises of his so-called synoptic successors has been viewed by an emergent *communis opinio* as only obliquely related to the central themes and rather stereotypical in nature. This view is an inadequate reading of the fairly abundant, and often unique, traditions concerning the Jews that can be found in these early Christian historiographical treatises, particularly in that of Socrates Scholasticus (b. 380), in his own *Historia Ecclesiastica* (ca. 439; henceforth *HE*). Indeed, Socrates, in the seventh and last book of his *HE* where he described contemporary affairs, preserves a significant set of anecdotes concerning contemporary or near-contemporary Jews of apparently unparalleled attestation. These tales go beyond simple documentation or stock caricature. One anecdote, dealing with an eruption of Jewish anti-Christian violence in early fifth-century Alexandria, left an important mark in Socrates' records and thus merits our special scrutiny.

Jewish-Christian Tension in Early Fifth-Century Alexandria

Prior to our close analysis of the episode that took place in Alexandria in 414, I wish to lay down some essential premises and guidelines. First, we must bear in mind that Socrates is our only contemporary testimony for these harrowing events, leaving us dependent on his account even as we question it. There is only one other witness to the Alexandrian events (based perhaps on local Egyptian Coptic recollections), which is preserved in John Bishop of Nikiu's seventh-century *Chronicle*—but it is only partially independent and rather late.⁵ Socrates' trustworthiness as our sole source, as in the case of his account of the destruction of the Alexandrian Serapeum in 392, rests to a great extent on the fact that he was privy in both cases to firsthand information imparted to him orally by eyewitnesses: in the earlier instance, by the fleeing Alexandrian grammarians (and Socrates' own mentors) Ammonius and Heladius; and in the later riots of 414, by the converted physician Adamantius. That is not to say that the events are untouched by authorial agendas; even Adamantius's voice may well have influenced Socrates' amplified description. Nonetheless, with all due skepticism, I believe that the main thrust of the account and the atmosphere it conveys are to be trusted.⁶

Second, concerning the social phenomenon of late antique religious

violence, it should be emphasized that an apparent paradox underlies the facts and the representation of this contemporary phenomenon. Thomas Sizgorich recently stressed that most members of late antique communities (pagans, Christians, sectarians, and Jews) had little interest in taking part in violence against their neighbors, but when pressed in moments of confrontation, communal members were willing to go to extremes: kill or suffer martyrdom. Moreover, these violent acts paradoxically served as “crucial resources for communal self-identity.”⁷ This counterintuitive set of realities should be kept in mind when assessing Socrates’ multilayered literary representation. Indeed, Socrates’ narrative culminates in the lynching of the pagan philosopher-mathematician Hypatia around 415.⁸ Hypatia’s execution was plotted by Socrates as the consummation of two decades of simmering interreligious tension; however, this portrayal confers on the chain of events a unifying narrative logic that it lacked and blurs the complexity of the situation.

To draw a comprehensive picture of the Alexandrian outbreaks, I carry out my analysis on two complementary levels. The discussion will be conducted along an axis stretching between the historical and the representational (“fictional”): between the “facts on the ground” and the mechanisms and dynamics shaping Socrates’ narration. The effort to expose the historical kernel focuses on two components in the story: the Jewish impulse leading to the audacious outburst of violence against the local Christian community; and the local bishop Cyril’s actions against the Jews—with the aim of exposing the rationale behind his retributive measures.⁹ I will then situate the episode within the wider historiographical matrix of Socrates’ *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

Finally, I will attempt to show that Socrates’ account of this eruption of violence is tinged with legal coloring. The claim concerning the implicit awareness and thematic significance of the legal codes in Socrates’ *HE* goes against accepted Socratic scholarship, which maintains that his historiographical agenda was divorced from legal considerations—all this while the Theodosian Code, as observed by Fergus Millar, reflected increasing anxiety over “communal violence and abuse initiated by either Christians and Jews” and Theodosius was “attempting to restrain Christian hostility to Jews” (but also Jewish hostility to Christians). All this effort was being carried out under “continually conflicting and changing pressures.”¹⁰

The Alexandrian Riots of 414–441 CE: Events and Context

It all began on a Sabbath morning at a theater where some Alexandrian Jews, instead of being at the synagogue for the customary reading of the portion of the Law, were enjoying a performance of dancers.¹¹ At the same time and in the same place, Socrates tells us, a crowd gathered to listen to Orestes, the local *praefectus augustalis* (and himself a Christian) as he was announcing new regulations concerning theater/dancing (*orchesis*) shows. The regulations were intended to curb the potential violence that often accompanied such performances. According to Socrates, the restrictions were opposed by the Jews.¹² In the gathering crowd were some of Cyril of Alexandria's¹³ most ardent followers, led by a certain Hierax, "a teacher of the rudimental branches of literature"—and a renowned Christian zealot. By all accounts, it was a highly volatile situation. When the Jews, who, according to Socrates, "are always hostile to the Christians," spotted Hierax, "they immediately cried out that he had come to excite sedition among the people." The Roman governor, Orestes, was already wary of Cyril, and harbored a grudge exacerbated by a "jealousy of the growing power of the bishops because they [most notably, Cyril] encroached on his jurisdiction."¹⁴ When Orestes heard a rumor that Cyril and his group were causing trouble, he ordered that Hierax be arrested and publicly tortured. Hearing of this incident, Cyril assembled the "principal people among the Jews" and "threatened them with the utmost severities unless they desisted from molesting the Christians." According to Socrates, the Jews were by now even more enraged: they did not comply with Cyril's demand and conspired to destroy the local Christians. At night, after spreading a false rumor that a local church was on fire, a Jewish mob (*plethos*) lay in wait to ambush the many Christians who they knew would rush to protect the building, slaying many.¹⁵ Cyril's retaliation was instantaneous. At daybreak, accompanied by an immense and angry mob (*polon plethos*), he pillaged synagogues, stripped the local Jews of their possessions, and drove them from the city. Socrates seems to insinuate that the entire Alexandrian Jewish community—who had lived there since the days of Alexander the Great—was expelled from the city.¹⁶

By now, Cyril and Orestes were at loggerheads. The governor, unable to restore order and punish the Christian culprits headed by Cyril, resorted to the only measure left in his arsenal: he filed a complaint with the emperor, Theodosius II.¹⁷ By immediately doing the same, Cyril demonstrated his own increasing political clout in the evolving local power struggle.¹⁸ According

to Socrates, things did not calm down; shortly thereafter, the Nitrian desert monks entered the conflict. The monks, avenging the deadly torturing of one of their rank, Ammonius, by the hands of Orestes (who had been violently attacked by them earlier), launched one of the most famous and brutal acts of hooliganism in ancient history: they lynched the celebrated pagan philosopher mathematician Hypatia—Synesius of Cyrene's much admired tutor—who, in the eyes of her persecutors, seemed to be "the last of the idols" (so aptly described by Peter Brown).¹⁹

So far, scholars have followed two paths in their treatment of this Socratic narrative: some aim to authenticate the story and enhance what we know of the facts. This camp also strives to decipher the political and cultural circumstances that led to the atrocities. The second approach deals predominantly with the literary and historiographical traits of Socrates' narrative. Yet in both streams of scholarship, Socrates' account has been basically accepted at face value.²⁰

Much, if not most, of the scholarly attention during the first half of the twentieth century was focused on the historical authenticity of the Alexandrian riots and on that of Hypatia's murder; very little attention was given to explaining the involvement of the local Jews in the violence. The findings may be summed up by two opposing views. In 1941, the celebrated papyrologist Harold Idris Bell, while accepting the authenticity of Socrates' account, expressed astonishment that an important and influential community succumbed to a fanatical Christian mob headed by a bishop, "one of the least attractive of the saints of the early church, who had so much more the wisdom of the serpent than the harmlessness of a dove."²¹ Some years later, Victor Tcherikover, perhaps similarly perplexed by the event, dismissed Socrates' testimony on the grounds that "it was too obviously biased in favor of the Christians to be altogether authentic."²²

It took over fifty years before a more comprehensive attempt to analyze the incidents and their Alexandrian context appeared: Christopher Haas's study of late antique Alexandria, followed by Susan Wessel's monograph on the life and career of its contemporary zealous bishop and our main protagonist, Cyril.²³ Yet even these important studies do not fully account for the Jewish presence in the episode. Because of Haas's keen interest in Cyril's political career, he focuses on Cyril's aggression and culpability, rather than on the Jews' insurgent behavior. He tends to dismiss arguments that simply pin Cyril's extreme conduct on his ruthlessness or, conversely, attribute it to his political ineptitude. In Haas's view, Cyril's actions were a calculated attempt to settle

scores with the local Roman governor following the factional power struggle that accompanied his election to office. Cyril, he argues, was emboldened by the new and more rigorous Christian current from Constantinople. According to Haas, immediately after Cyril's election, he began to take action against those who had opposed his nomination, beginning with the local Novatian sectarians—closing down their churches and stripping their bishop of his possessions (Socrates, *HE* 7.7).²⁴ Later, possibly for the same reasons, he began his vendetta against the Jews, against whom he held an extreme animosity voiced in his festal letters as well as in his exegetical works.²⁵

Despite his anti-Jewish tirades, Cyril was likely unable to implement his policies against the Jews, probably because the local Jewish community was of substantial size and importance, enjoying the respect and protection of the local Roman authorities.²⁶ Haas points out that at the time, Jews were still a political force to be reckoned with in the empire. Cyril needed “some sort of local cause célèbre before he could proceed.”²⁷ Changes in the imperial administration may have provided Cyril with the hoped-for opportunity and assisted him in his decision to confront the Jews as well as the pagans of Alexandria.²⁸ To these considerations, one ought to add the ongoing tension between the local pagan and the Christian communities, which led to Hypatia's death—not only as an extension of the earlier deep grudges (the riots of 392) but also because of Hypatia's growing influence in local Alexandrian circles—including among Christian intellectuals (Synesius) and Roman dignitaries (Orestes).²⁹ The deepening intellectual and cultural rift between the two communities signified in Hypatia's execution was later to taint the local Christian community's more insulated and antagonistic stance vis-à-vis Greek thought and culture (which was influenced by, and perhaps reflected in, the thought of the monastic ascetic circles in the Nitrian desert).³⁰

For all its usefulness, Haas's intricate explanation falls short of supplying the full context necessary for understanding these events. Even if we take into account the lingering atmosphere of toxic intolerance in Alexandria since 392 (which admittedly presents suggestive parallels to the 414 riots), it is doubtful whether this would have been enough to trigger the later chain of events. Moreover, if we accept Haas's description of the circumstances of Cyril's actions and stick to Socrates' sequence of events, how are we to explain the first violent encounter in the chain—the behavior of the Jews that led to their eventual expulsion from Alexandria? Even when we take into account Cyril's provocations and threats, the Alexandrian Jews' aggressive actions clearly need to be explained.³¹

Some segments of the local Alexandrian Jewish community were not meek or submissive. The local Jews must have harbored the possibility that they might get away with this aggression. This confidence is complicated if we assume, along with Haas, that by 414, clouds were gathering on the Jews' horizon in Palestine as well as in the Diaspora.³² Which leads to the question, if Socrates' account is to be accepted: What motivated and enabled the Jews, a local Alexandrian minority (however large), to instigate a showdown with Cyril's followers and to orchestrate and execute a deadly attack on the powerful local Christian majority?

With all the implicit sympathy that the local Jewish community received from Orestes, the local Roman (Christian) governor who was deeply hostile toward Cyril, it is doubtful that the Jewish mob, given the scale of the disruption, could have received substantive support from the local Roman administration.³³ Therefore, this bold attack on the local Christian community and, by extension, on the Alexandrian social order must be understood according to a broader rationale, which I will demonstrate with an anecdote having an analogous social setting and atmosphere.

Following the interrogation of motive, how does one explain Cyril's mode of retaliation against the local Jews, which seems to reflect calculation more than the spontaneity that might fit his zealous personality? Cyril resorted to a minimal retributive act—not killing but plundering, dispossessing the local synagogues rather than destroying them. Moreover, what enabled him to take a measure as extreme as exiling a thriving, rival community from Alexandria? Possibly, Socrates toned down his depiction of Cyril's vengeance, for, in the later account of John of Nikiu, Cyril is reported to have destroyed the Jewish synagogues. In any case, the actions taken by both belligerent parties need further exploration.

Compounding our questions are serious doubts that have recently been put forward concerning elements in Socrates' episode. Philippe Blauddau has questioned Cyril's ability to expel the Jews from the city and take possession of their synagogues and property, and has also questioned the lack of any imprint of the harrowing events in Alexandria on the imperial law codes (unlike other events such as those in North Africa, a few years previously, to which we shall return).³⁴ One cannot rule out the possibility that lurking behind the local Christian triumphalist posture of having rid the city of its Jewish community lies a more mundane outcome of the clash, a simple tale of the flight of Jews from the wrath of an enraged Christian mob and perhaps also from Roman punitive measures.

In searching for episodes with similar characteristics, we should exhaust local precedents that might have been triggers for the later Alexandrian riots. As hinted earlier in this essay, the most obvious parallel is the destruction of the Serapeum in 392. In both cases, Christian provocateurs—Theophilus (the local bishop) then and Hierax here—set the events in motion. Guerrilla-like actions by the provoked parties (pagans and Jews) and the slaying of Christians were followed by mass displacement of the assailing communities, by escaping the wrath of the Christians (as did the pagans) or by the expulsion of the community (as in the case of the Jews).

That these patterns are not merely literary, but conform to recognized patterns of behavior in cases of extreme ethnic and group violence, has been established by a set of comparative sociological studies.³⁵ However, while a lingering fallout from the earlier Alexandrian riots only partially explains the unusual and particular acts of the Jews in the scenario of 414–15, Socrates' account remains enigmatic vis-à-vis Jewish motivation in confronting the Alexandrian Christian community given the local situation; so we must seek explanatory parallels and events elsewhere.

The Calama (North Africa) Riot in 408 CE and the “Calama Syndrome”

It is my contention that another episode of interreligious violence that took place only six years earlier in North Africa supplies us with a missing link in the political logic governing the deadly actions of the Alexandrian Jewish community. The episode in question should not be envisaged as a linear antecedent but rather as one that reflects an analogous political, religious, and social setting that might as well have had an impact in Alexandria.

I am referring to the riots in Calama (Guelma, North Africa, not far from Hippo Regius, Augustine's town). In the course of those riots—erupting on the Kalends of June (June 1), 408—local pagans processed, according to Augustine (our main contemporary source; *Ep.* 91, 95),³⁶ in an “insolently daring” manner before the local church. The parade was disturbed by Christian clerics headed by the local bishop Possidius. In the ensuing week, the church was stoned and later torched, one cleric was killed, and others were forced into hiding, among them Possidius himself. The local urban authorities were not only reluctant to intervene while the mob was roaming the town in search of the fleeing Christian clerics, but they later ignored Possidius's demands

for justice. In the end, they refrained from punishing the perpetrators. All this took place while imperial laws forbidding unlawful pagan celebrations and others permitting bishops to use their ecclesiastical power to prohibit such practices were on the books (*CTh* 16.10.1; 16.10.13; *Sirm.* 12).³⁷ Thus, it would seem that Possidius was up against the local elites³⁸ and authorities, who, though at least in part Christian, held at best ambivalent attitudes toward traditional polytheistic worship and civic celebrations. It was only after a hasty journey to the imperial court at Ravenna that Possidius was able in 409 to secure a sweeping directive from the emperor Honorius, ordering local authorities to prosecute these crimes and punish those responsible (*Sirm.* 14).

At first, parallels between the events in Calama (and in other cities of North Africa) and those in Alexandria are far from evident; but a closer look reveals significant similarities. Thanks to the meticulous reconstruction of the local social and religious matrix in Calama and the sequence of violent activities in that town by Erika Hermanowicz and, more recently, by Brent Shaw,³⁹ we are able to draw illuminating parallels with the Alexandrian riots six years later.⁴⁰

The local social forces in Calama comprised a Christian minority headed by a bishop at odds with the leading elites in town but eager to assert his own and his community's stance and implement new rules for the city's public sphere. Opposing him were the local townspeople (we do not know their religious affiliation), who were inclined to maintain the local civic rites and ceremonies with all their pagan pomp. The town's magistrates were "irritated by Possidius' initiatives," and, together with the local elites, "partial to traditional forms of polytheistic worship and civic observance."⁴¹ Hence, according to Shaw, the local parade was seen as a claim for "new territory," and the perceived "infringement on accepted boundaries" ignited violence.⁴²

Acknowledging minor differences, the Alexandrian social and ethnic-religious setting was structurally quite similar. A substantial local Christian minority led by a rigorous bishop, Cyril (surrounded by zealous thugs [*parabalani*] and later by monks from the Nitrian desert), stood at loggerheads with the local Roman prefect, Orestes, who watched with growing dismay Cyril's encroachment on the jurisdiction of the Roman authorities (Socrates, *HE* 7.13).⁴³ At the same time, tension was rife between the extreme Christian circles and the thriving local Jewish community and between the Christians (at least the clerical circles and their above-mentioned adherers) and the possibly dwindling, yet still-influential, pagan community. The most striking feature linking the parallel violent episodes in Calama and Alexandria was the way

in which the violence between the parties was triggered, and later escalated. In both cases, a bishop's attempt to curb customary public conduct was met with vehement opposition, which, when joined by the implicit support of the local authorities, rapidly escalated into a full-scale factional war with casualties. There was yet another similarity to draw with the situation in North Africa. During the later fourth century and the first decades of the fifth, violence became rampant in the North African countryside and cities, exacerbated by the presence and activities of recruited militias or self-propelled *agonistici*, or holy fighters. For the Christian cause, these thugs provoked their own martyrdoms at the hands of rival pagans. Two instances in Socrates' account of the riots in Alexandria betray similar patterns of behavior: that of Ammonius, who attacked Orestes, the governor, and was later tortured to death, leading Cyril to enter his name into the circle of martyrs; and the less explicit example of Hierax, Cyril's henchman, who appeared earlier on the scene at the theater and was accused by the Jews as having come to "stir up a sedition among the people" (*stasis*). We might now see his action there as intended to incite public violence.⁴⁴

We are unable to determine whether the Calama incident had an impact on the participants in the Alexandrian drama. Though news traveled fast, we have no way of proving that one event sparked the other.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, the Calama riot manifested, microcosmically, the tensions between the minorities.⁴⁶ We may be witnessing a "Calama syndrome" in Alexandria, whereby Christian infringement on the civic domain (theater), augmented with threats toward Jews, sent the city's already tense rival communities into a frenzy. In the case of the Alexandrian Jews, their sense of increasing marginalization in this civic versus Christian dynamic may have been a factor as well. Unlike in the case of Calama, the violence exhibited by the Jews of Alexandria was a spontaneous lashing out, with the hope or expectation of tacit local Roman administrative support. If my contention is accepted, the contemporary North African example of acute interreligious violence may shed further light on the Alexandrian riots beyond what has so far been adduced in the scholarship.

The Calama precedent might also shed light on Cyril's retributive actions against the Alexandrian Jewish community, though, as postulated above, those actions might have reflected the church's and Socrates' ideals of a Christian etiquette of mildness, in the interest of upholding the law and maintaining peace.⁴⁷ A close look reveals the possible imprint of the earlier Calama incident on Cyril's ridding Alexandria of its Jewish presence; when seen through the Socratic prism, it reveals further important symbolic overtones. It would

appear that Cyril's actions were carried out in the spirit of the fourteenth *Sirmondian Constitution* (from January 15, 409), issued by Honorius's court in Ravenna in response to the plea of the African bishops following the Calama riot.⁴⁸ According to that law—which, though issued in the West, reflected imperial resolution in both parts of the empire⁴⁹—perpetrators of atrocities against the church or its clerics would be punished by the lawful provincial authorities in the following manner: “The judges shall either deliver them to the mines or shall compel them to undergo the penalty of deportation. Their property shall be joined to our fisc, and thus they shall have their lives conceded to them by our customary clemency” (*Sirm.* 14).⁵⁰

Perhaps still confident because of his election with the assistance of Roman swords, but knowing that he and his flock were unlikely to receive legal or other aid from Orestes against the Jewish culprits (toward whom the latter had already demonstrated his partiality), Cyril took the law into his own hands, administering punitive measures (exile and confiscation of property) in full accordance with the stipulations and spirit of the fourteenth *Sirmondian Constitution*.⁵¹ It should come as no surprise that Orestes, though greatly indignant, did not take action against Cyril. Instead, he most likely chose to file a complaint to the emperor on the bishop's vigilante activities and disruption of public order. Cyril's avoidance of bloodshed spared him the accusations of crude vengeance. By resorting to the above “lawfully sanctioned” measures—despite the fact that it was in excess of his own jurisdiction, in that he took the law into his own hands—he seems to have subverted the spirit of an explicit law against the destruction of synagogues (as reported by John of Nikiu), which had been promulgated by the imperial court on July 26, 412 (*CTh* 16.8.20).⁵² By his actions, Cyril accomplished two things: he subtly and effectively drew a parallel between pagans and Jews (in accordance with what he might have gathered from the spirit of the *Sirmondian Constitution*); and he served the local Jewish community a devastating blow. Thus, in one stroke, he rid the Christian community of one of its greatest local rivals and rid Alexandria of one of its most prominent and ancient ethnic communities.⁵³ So much for the possible reconstruction of the evidence concerning the Alexandrian episode of the violent encounter between Jews and Christians in the early fifth century, as imparted to us via Socrates Scholasticus's *History*.

Yet caution is advised, for this impression might be an overstatement of the facts by Socrates. If what took place was the voluntary flight of the local Jews from the city, it is Socrates, not Cyril, who makes it a quasi-licit, punitive act of mass deportation, albeit by an unauthorized party. This conjecture leads

us to the second segment of our bipartite analysis: I shall examine Socrates' narrative for the framing concepts to determine the place of this episode in Socrates' ecclesiastical history.

Jews in Socrates' History: Through the Prism of the Alexandria Riots

Socrates' account is our only contemporary source, which further complicates the teasing out of his agenda and the place of Jews in it.⁵⁴ Scholarship in Christian historiography, mainly from the last two decades, has reached a consensus that Jews were of little interest or importance to Socrates and that their portrayal was largely stereotypical.⁵⁵ This view extends to all of Eusebius's fifth-century continuators, save for a recent interesting attempt to set Sozomen's *History* on a different footing.⁵⁶ By the fifth century, much had changed regarding the consolidation of Christian power since Eusebius's days. In that precarious atmosphere, it made sense to give a prominent role to Jews, their history, and their fate since their plot against Christ. Eusebius placed this topic among the main themes on his historiographical agenda, as stated in the preface to his *History*, and also devoted great chunks of the first five books of his treatise to the Jews. Thus, in light of the transformation of the Christian world since Eusebius's day, it is remarkable to come across Sozomen's opening remark in his *History*: "My mind has been often exercised in inquiring how it is that other men are very ready to believe in God the Word, while the Jews are so incredulous, although it was to them that instruction concerning the things of God was from the beginning imparted" (Sozomen, *HE* 1.1).

Given the prominence of Sozomen's statement, presenting his thematic guidelines in the same vein as Eusebius had, we should reevaluate any easy dismissal of the Jewish theme in post-Eusebian history. Sozomen's opening words were a cry of dismay and perhaps an implicit effort to check the spirit of triumphalism that had engulfed contemporary presentation of Christian history. In other words, a century after Eusebius, who placed the Jews and their fate as focal points of his narrative, the continuing reluctance of the Jews to convert to Christianity was a blemish on the Christian banner. Indeed, Jews and Judaism remained important topics for later Christian historians, Socrates included, though their treatment was less expressive and vocal, necessitating a more refined analysis.

Let us return to Socrates' narrative of the Alexandrian riots. Our treatment

of the rhetorical program of the episode begins from the local and moves to broader observations on the episode in the context of Socrates' *History*. For all our effort to expose the so-called facts, questions concerning the local atmosphere remain. To compound the problem, the event left no contemporary traces outside of Socrates. Even Cyril, in all his writing, including his festal letters with their venomous attacks on the Jews, does not even hint at the fate of the Alexandrian Jews, let alone his own "heroic" part in their deportation.⁵⁷ Without dismissing the veracity of the episode outright, one might still suggest that Socrates' account was shaped by other considerations that can be gleaned from his carefully constructed agenda concerning the divinely orchestrated history of the church and the place of the Jews within it.

Let us now reexamine the accepted view on the Jews in Socrates' narrative by addressing Theresa Urbainczyk's rather typical characterization of Socrates' Jews as deceitful—and here, lawless as well. Could Socrates' depiction have been aimed at alerting, if not persuading, imperial circles—bolstered no doubt by public opinion—to abandon what was left of the apparently lenient attitude toward the Jews in imperial legislation?⁵⁸ This may explain why Socrates emphasized the Jews' duplicity, so clearly manifested in their conduct on the Sabbath. On July 26, 412, a law was promulgated by the emperors Honorius and Theodosius II, reaffirming older stipulations that the Sabbath should be recognized as an official holiday for the Jews. Thus no summons should constrain any of them under the pretext of private or public business; for, on that day, the Jews "observe the honor of their cult" (*cultus sui reverentiam servant*).⁵⁹ The promulgation of the law protecting the Sabbath in the summer of 412 juxtaposed with the mockery of its spirit by the Alexandrian Jews in 414 (preferring the theatrical amusement to the hearing of the Law) would have been obvious, as well as provocative, in some quarters.⁶⁰ This dynamic may also underwrite the juxtaposition of the Jews' "lawless" conduct when, according to Socrates, they are described as opposed to the regulations enacted by Orestes concerning the public shows.

The immediate impression one gets from reading Socrates is that Jews are the ultimate villains, guilty of setting off this entire series of violent episodes.⁶¹ One cannot avoid the impression that Socrates wove together the Jewish-Christian skirmish in 414 with the later events leading to Hypatia's murder to impress upon his readers the sequence of violence, which, though it erupted on Cyril's watch and was escalated by his hotheadedness (*to phronema enthermoi*), was triggered by the local Jews.

Socrates reinforces this message by immediately juxtaposing another

brutal episode of lynching—an anti-Christian crime—involving a disorderly Jewish crowd. The Jews of Inmestar (between Chalcis and Antioch in Syria) were amusing themselves, Socrates tells us, with their usual variety of sports and absurdities. Impelled by drunkenness, they scoffed at Christians and Christ. Seizing a Christian boy, they bound him to a cross, and, with laughter and jeers, they ultimately scourged him (Socrates, *HE* 7.16). Such flamboyant examples of bad behavior were not meant to pass lightly by a Christian readership.

In addition to wondering how Socrates employs Jews in his grand Christian narrative, we might ask about Cyril's role. Though discussed at length above, Socrates' depiction of the bishop's action might have carried a symbolic, as well as a political, dimension. In retaliation for the Jewish murderous assault on the local Christian community, Cyril and his flock took possession of synagogues and then banished the Jews, permitting Cyril's followers to plunder the Jews' possessions.⁶² These actions violated, at least in spirit, the 412 law defending the Jewish synagogues from damage and plunder (the same law exempting the Jews from being summoned on the Sabbath). However, Cyril's actions against the Jews as exposed in Socrates' narrative might also have reflected a sinister desire for ethnic cleansing, space appropriation, and purification prevalent in Christian-pagan relations in contemporary Egypt.⁶³ Hence, the inflated tone of Socrates' rhetoric of deportation, which gives the impression of a total and indiscriminate exile of the Jews: "Thus the Jews who had inhabited the city from the time of Alexander the Macedonian," he concludes, "were expelled from it, stripped of all they possessed, and dispersed some in one direction and some in another" (Socrates, *HE* 7.13).⁶⁴

Socrates' storytelling had yet another goal. He frequently emphasized the important role that leadership had in determining the course of the Church. Peaceful administration of the community, coupled with tolerance and appeasement toward heretics and others, yielded divine approval and support.⁶⁵ This view of the history of the Church is especially apparent in the sixth and seventh books of Socrates' *History*. The narrative in these books is the climax of the entire work. When writing them, especially the seventh, Socrates was engaged like the great classical peers of ancient historiography in the act of writing contemporary history. While doing so, he examined various types of church leadership.⁶⁶

Looking at the headings of the chapters in the seventh book, one is struck by the division between, on the one hand, the anecdotes concerning the churches (Orthodox and Novatian) of Constantinople, led by Atticus (and

Paul the Novatian), and, on the other hand, the anecdotes concerning the other sees—that of Rome and, more important, that of Alexandria, under Cyril's leadership. It is no secret that the two sees—Constantinople and Alexandria—were in deep rivalry, the circumstances of which were described already back in 1926 by Byzantinist Norman Baynes.⁶⁷ Alexandria, according to Baynes, viewed Constantinople's rapid rise to power with mounting resentment. Founded only in 330 as the capital of the Eastern Empire, its bishop was recognized in the course of the 381 council convened in Constantinople as ranking only second to the bishop of Rome "because the city of which he is bishop is the New Rome."

The rivalry peaked during John Chrysostom's term as patriarch of the capital. The dossier of John's banishment from Constantinople following the Synod of the Oak (403) has Theophilus of Alexandria's fingerprints all over it. During Chrysostom's period in office, Theophilus found himself increasingly involved in the affairs of the Constantinopolitan Church, until 404, when he succeeded in deposing John, ostensibly on procedural and administrative grounds.⁶⁸ Cyril, Theophilus's nephew and successor in the see of Saint Mark in Alexandria, was similarly ambitious and continued his uncle's policy to a greater extreme, initiating his first attack on Socrates' (literary) protégés, the Novatians.⁶⁹

A few years earlier, however, at the see of Saint Andrew (that is, Constantinople), it was Atticus who replaced John Chrysostom. Atticus, wrote Socrates, was "a man distinguished alike for learning, piety and discretion" (Socrates, *HE* 6.20; 7.2). With this characterization, Socrates drew the contrast between the two models of ecclesiastical leadership. Socrates had no reservations about disclosing his biases, especially when it accorded with his unconcealed and ardent local patriotism. In his eyes, the affairs of Constantinople were of pre-eminent importance and therefore more worthy of commemoration than those taking place elsewhere. Thus, when describing the disturbing affairs in Alexandria, Socrates impresses upon his readers that Atticus's leadership was the most desired. Not only was the Roman prefect of Egypt, Orestes, baptized by him, but so was the above-mentioned banished Alexandrian Jew and physician, Adamantius, who fled as far as the capital to receive baptism from Atticus.⁷⁰ For all we know, Adamantius's report to Socrates on the escalation in Alexandria might have already been tainted with exaggerated details, which only played into Socrates' hands.

Indeed, the lesson that Socrates wished his readers to learn was that piety and tolerance bring success and unity and, in the long run, attract converts.

Atticus's episcopacy (406–425) was meant by Socrates to model the traits of successful ecclesiastical leadership. In this context, the Jews played an important role. The Jews and their congeners (the renegade Novatians led by Sabbatius) remained outcasts, liable to punishment by God's wrath and persecution in the hands of his devout servants. But were God's faithful servants to create an accommodating and tolerant atmosphere, Jews, overcome by the irenic climate, would choose to convert to the new faith and walk to the baptismal font, as was the case in Atticus's Constantinople. Thus, the Constantinopolitan healing story of the paralytic Jew (Socrates, *HE* 7.4) is meant to resemble, in form and message, the episode of the paralytic healed by Jesus at the Bethesda pool in Jerusalem (John 5); similar would be the apostolic-like miracle with a Jewish imposter performed by Paul the Novatian, bishop of Constantinople (*HE* 7.17), another ally of Atticus. Through the use of apostolic narrative allusion, Socrates enhanced his portrait of Atticus as an exemplary Christian leader. Hence, earlier, in describing Atticus's ordination, Socrates stated that he was "an ascetic from an early age and in addition to a moderate share of learning, he possessed a large amount of natural prudence" (*HE* 6.20). In the beginning of the seventh and last book of his *History*, Socrates states: "Wherefore it came about that the churches under his episcopate attained a very flourishing condition . . . by his prudence called forth the admiration of the heretics. . . . Besides this he was affable and entertaining in conversation and ever ready to sympathize with the afflicted" (*HE* 7.2).

In short, Atticus was as learned and prudent a person as he was peaceful. All this stood in sharp contrast to the arrogance and highhandedness of Cyril, whose actions brought misery to many, including members of his own flock.⁷¹ The Jews and their fate served as a litmus test, and their right treatment denoted the right and desired leadership in the church. In this context, Socrates' account can be understood as a response to Sozomen's anxiety about the Jews' general failure to acknowledge Christianity's supremacy. By juxtaposing the two rival sees, Socrates takes an oblique swipe at Cyril, whose leadership through the horrific events in Alexandria were to be seen as an obstacle in the church's striving for victory over its rivals—his local triumph, a net loss for the cause. Socrates was ready to go to great lengths to maintain this dichotomous presentation of desired and deplorable leadership, even at the price of withholding some embarrassing biographical details concerning his exemplar, Atticus of Constantinople.⁷² It seems that the deep-seated political rivalry between these two leading ecclesiastical centers took pride of

place, and within this rivalry, the Jews served as the ultimate divinely awarded bounty.

In the long run, confrontation with the Jews—and, above all, the desire to convert them—remained an important concern not just for Sozomen but also for Socrates and for the other continuators of Eusebius, the founding father of the genre of church history.

CHAPTER 8

Narrating Salvation: Verbal Sacrifices in Late Antique Liturgical Poetry

OPHIR MÜNZ-MANOR

Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to
God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

—*Epistle to the Hebrews* 13.15

The decline in animal offering in antiquity is associated ordinarily with the rise of new kinds of religiosity in general and prayer in particular.¹ Indeed, a transition from blood sacrifices to verbal liturgies occurred in the first centuries of the Common Era; yet we should acknowledge that sacrifice is not the opposite of prayer and that the theological and historical divide between the two is sometimes overemphasized in modern scholarship.² In his study of late antique Hebrew liturgical poetry, Michael Swartz touched upon these issues: “One way of addressing the problem of the absence of sacrifice in a system to which it was once central is through rituals of recitation. That is, by recounting a lost ritual verbally, a community develops a way of memorializing that ritual in an act which is itself a ritual. . . . Recitation needs to be taken quite seriously as a potent form of ritual behavior and as an example of the actualization of sacred space in time. Memorization, recitation, and performance, we must remember, are physical acts, requiring intensive preparation, stamina, and physical prowess.”³

Seen in this light, such phrases as “a sacrifice of praise” and “fruit of lips,” quoted above from the *Epistle to the Hebrews*,⁴ or the rabbinic dictum “which

service is of the heart? You must say this is prayer”⁵ should be understood as references to concrete cultic practices. The fact that Jews and Christians did not sacrifice animals after the first century CE does not mean that they did not retain significant sacrificial elements in their cults—liturgical, magical, or other.⁶ A remarkable example of a “verbal sacrifice” is found in tractate *Ta’anit* from the Babylonian Talmud; the text relates an imagined conversation between Abraham and God. Abraham asks:

At a time when the Temple is not in existence, what will become of [the Israelites who sinned]?

[God responds]: I have already established for them the Order of Sacrifices (*Seder korbanot*), when they read them before me, I will count it for them as if they had offered them before me, and I will pardon them for all their transgressions. (bTa’an 27b)⁷

According to the late ancient author of this text, God has promised Abraham that reading passages about sacrifice will have the same effect as performing the ritual of sacrifice described in these verses.⁸ The somewhat ambiguous formulation “I will count it for them as if they had offered them before me” (*Ma’ale ani ‘alehem ke’ilu hikrivum le-fanay*) suggests that there still existed a hierarchy between blood sacrifice and a verbal one. Yet the biblical setting of the imagined conversation and the heavenly nature of the promise give the verbal sacrifice a very high status. In other words, the verbal substitute for sacrifice is constructed as an ancient practice dictated by God and not a mere consequence of a historical event, namely, the destruction of the Temple. This text stands out in its explicit association of sacrifice and narration, but we find similar approaches to the liturgical word in other texts as well—for example, the following words of John Chrysostom (ca. 347–407 CE): “Do not then think that you have come here simply to say the words, but when you make the response, consider that response to be a covenant. For when you say, ‘Like the hart desires the water springs, my soul desires you, O God’ (Ps 41.2), you make a covenant with God. You have signed a contract without paper or ink” (John Chrysostom, *Expos.* in Ps 41.5).⁹

Chrysostom refers here to the chanting of a specific psalm in the liturgy, but his intention is undoubtedly more general. For him, reciting a biblical verse is more than just saying it audibly; it is a way of doing something¹⁰ or, more precisely, of establishing a relationship with God. It would not be

superfluous to mention in this regard that the latter is one of the most notable features of sacrifice in general.¹¹

This essay investigates the liturgical rites that can be regarded as verbal sacrifices, namely, where stories about sacrifices are narrated to involve the congregation in the sacred past and for the liturgical present to become an act of sacrifice. First, I will compare a Jewish liturgical poem for the Day of Atonement with a Christian Eucharistic prayer in which narratives about the creation of the universe are associated with sacrificial cults of atonement. Besides the striking similarities in structure and content, the two texts share a ritual theory that emphasizes the re-narration of biblical events as part of a reenactment of a sacrificial cult. Second, I will juxtapose several liturgical poems on the binding of Isaac and will single out their sacrificial function, which, in this case, has a direct connection to the subject of the biblical scene itself, namely a sacrifice and its substitute.

Liturgical texts are often underplayed in the historical discussion of Judaism and Christianity in Late Antiquity. Liturgical texts are usually discussed in context of theology and exegesis, as if they were versified versions of rabbinic or patristic writings. However, more scholars are now aware of the significant and independent role that liturgy played in the formation of the self and communal identities of many Christians and Jews, especially the lay or unlettered, and of the pivotal role of poetry in the liturgical context.¹² Liturgy offers us a gateway to one of the central places where these identities were shaped in practice; considering liturgy will broaden our perspective and give us a better understanding of these processes.

The *Seder 'Avodah* and the Anaphora in the Apostolic Constitutions

The *Seder 'avodah* (lit., the order of [the sacrifices] service) is a lengthy poetic composition for the Day of Atonement.¹³ The *Seder 'avodah* that I will consider here, called “You Established the World from the Beginning,” is probably the earliest example of this literary genre and should be dated to sometime in the fourth century CE.¹⁴ The Christian text is an extensive Eucharistic prayer in prose (also known as anaphora) contained in the eighth chapter of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, which was compiled around 380 somewhere near Antioch.¹⁵ My point of departure will be the striking similarities between the two liturgical pieces: both open with a lengthy description of the creation of the

universe, the story of Eden, the deeds of the patriarchs, and finally, the rituals of the Day of Atonement by the high priest in the Temple (in the *Seder 'avodah*) and the acts of Jesus during his lifetime, especially in the Last Supper (in the anaphora). To emphasize the similarities between the texts, Table 8.1 compares selected passages from each.

Table 8.1. A Comparison of the *'Avodah* and Anaphora

<i>Section</i>	<i>Seder 'avodah</i>	<i>Anaphora</i>
<i>Creation of the World</i>	You established the world from the beginning / you founded the earth and formed creatures // When you surveyed the world of chaos and confusion / You banished gloom and put light in place //	For you are he who set out heavens as a vault, and stretched it out as a screen, and established the earth on nothing by your sole intent; you fixed the firmament, and arranged night and day; you brought light out of your treasures, and by its contraction you brought on darkness [to give] rest to the living things that move in the world.
<i>Creation of Man</i>	You formed from the earth a lump of soil in your image / and commanded him concerning the tree of life // He forsook your word and he was forsaken from Eden / but you did not destroy him for the sake of the work of your hands //	And not only have you fashioned the world, but you have also made man in it, the citizen of the world, displaying him as the ornament of the world. . . . But when he neglected the commandment and tasted the forbidden fruit, by the deceit of the serpent and the counsel of the woman, you justly drove him out of the paradise.
<i>The Patriarchs</i>	The father of a multitude shined forth like a star / suddenly, from Ur of the Chaldees to illuminate in darkness // From his root you brought forth a perfect man / sealed with your covenant when he was taken from the womb // You gave him twelve tribes / beloved by the most high they were called from the womb //	It was you who rescued Abraham from the godlessness of his forefathers and made him inheritor of the world. . . . You made Isaac the child of promise; you made Jacob the father of twelve sons, and his descendants to become a multitude, and brought him into Egypt with seventy-five souls.

<i>Section</i>	<i>Seder 'avodah</i>	<i>Anaphora</i>
<i>Aaron and the Priesthood</i>	Amram was chosen from the seed of Levi / Aaron holy to the lord you sanctified from his stock // You adorned him in woven garments / and by his sacrifices he annulled your anger //	You glorified Aaron and his descendants with the honor of priesthood, you punished the Hebrews when they sinned, and received them when they turned back.
<i>The high Priest / Jesus¹</i>	In Aaron's place stood one of his clan / to serve before you on the day of forgiveness // For seven days he studied in our temple / the laws of the procedure and the service of the day. . . . // Inside he entered to offer the incense / and to repair the lamps and to sacrifice limbs. . . . // He hurried and washed his hands and his feet / and first approached toward his bull // He stood in awe before the Most High / and said over it words of confession: // "O Lord, I have sinned, I have done wrong, I have transgressed before you, I and my household. O Lord, forgive the sins and iniquities and transgressions that I have committed against you." ²	He lived a holy life and taught according to the law; he drove away every disease and every sickness from men. . . . He made known your name to those who did know it; he put ignorance to flight; he rekindled piety; he fulfilled your will; he accomplished the work you gave him. . . . For in the night he was betrayed, he took bread in his holy and blameless hands, looking up to you, his God and Father, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: "This is the mystery of the new covenant: take of it, eat; this is my body which is broken for many for the forgiveness of sins." ³

¹ Jesus is often displayed in early Christian literature (notably, in the Epistle to the Hebrews) as *the high priest*; see Daniel Stökl ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity: The Day of Atonement from Second Temple Judaism to the Fifth Century* (Tübingen, 2003), 180–97.

² Michael Swartz and Joseph Yahalom, *Avodah: An Anthology of Ancient Poetry for Yom Kippur* (University Park, Pa., 2005), 70–81.

³ Ronald C. D. Jasper and Geoffrey J. Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed* (Collegeville, Minn., 1990), 105–10.

These excerpts reveal similarity on several levels; both texts open with the creation of the universe and focus on major events in the history of the world as narrated in the Bible. Both center finally on a person who is essentially the reason for the creation of the world and the one responsible for atoning

for the sins and transgressions of the people.¹⁶ Naturally, there are differences between the texts in content, style, and form; but the striking similarities cannot be played down.¹⁷ Surprisingly, the likeness of the texts has gone almost unnoticed in scholarly discussions, although each one of them has received a fair amount of attention. The only scholar known to me who pointed out the resemblance between them is Louis Ligier, who, in the 1960s, published several studies on the subject.¹⁸ Ligier, whose main interest was the development of Christian liturgy, concluded that the anaphora in the *Apostolic Constitutions* was modeled after the Jewish *Seder 'avodah*. This conclusion was based on the accepted opinion in Ligier's days that the *Apostolic Constitutions* is a Christian adaptation of Jewish sources.¹⁹ Only recently, Daniel Stökl ben Ezra touched upon Ligier's thesis and dismissed it by claiming that "the parallel to the *Sidre 'avodah* is imprecise, and the single motifs appear elsewhere in Christian liturgical context. New arguments are needed to shore up this thesis."²⁰ Stökl ben Ezra is correct in claiming that some details in Ligier's analysis are imprecise; however, the textual evidence as a whole suggests that Ligier's intuition was correct. I believe that the examination of the text from the viewpoint of ritual and liturgy will reveal their shared characteristics and function and will therefore strengthen Ligier's assertion.

Scholars tended to see the *Seder 'avodah* as a reflection of a lost past or a prediction of a promised future; in other words, the text was understood to remind congregants of what took place in the Temple or to perpetuate the memory thereof. In recent years, several scholars have suggested that the *Seder 'avodah* is focused instead on the liturgical present as a full substitute for the sacrificial cult of the Temple. Zvi Zohar demonstrated this tendency by focusing on bodily gestures and declarations of the cantor and congregants during the performance of the *Seder 'avodah* that imitate the gestures of the priests and lay attendants in the Temple.²¹ Zohar also noted that the poets took great caution in their description of the cult and insisted on providing the proper ritual laws that relate to animal sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible. According to Zohar, this fact proves that, for the poets, the accurate description of the sacrifice is as obligatory as the rules of animal sacrifice; for that reason, an error in the verbal description will blemish the sacrifice.²² Michael Swartz went one step further and explained the *Seder 'avodah* as an alternative cult of a sacrificial nature. Swartz wrote of the *Seder 'avodah* that "its purpose is not to recapitulate a historical event by ritual recognition, but to recall a ritual by recounting it verbally."²³ He describes the *Seder 'avodah* as a "ritual about myth about ritual,"²⁴ namely, a late antique

ritual (the *Seder 'avodah*) about a biblical myth (the sacrificial history of the world) about biblical sacrificial ritual (of the Day of Atonement). According to Swartz, the *Seder 'avodah* operates in the present although not entirely dismissing the remembrance of the past or the messianic promise for the future.²⁵ Ultimately, the performance of the *Seder 'avodah* in the synagogue, according to Zohar and Swartz, is a full transformation of the Temple cult. The verbal sacrifice is atoning as are the blood sacrifices in the Temple, and by telling a story about sacrifice and imitating bodily gestures, the congregation reenacts the sacrificial ritual; similar things can be said of the recitation of the account of the Last Supper in the anaphora, in particular, and the Eucharist, in general.

There is also the question of the historical introduction to the description of the sacrificial cult in the *Seder 'avodah* and the anaphora. The anaphora incorporated into the *Apostolic Constitutions* sets the historical background of the reenacted events, namely, the narration of the history of the world from creation to salvation. This fact was highlighted recently by Derek Krueger, who stated that “the anaphoras considered here, however, give evidence of a late ancient theory of ritual that emphasized the role of telling a story alongside acting one out.”²⁶ Krueger’s description fits very well *mutatis mutandis* the *Seder 'avodah*; not only do the texts share literary and thematic motifs; they both function in a similar way in the liturgy.²⁷ It is worthwhile to mention that a combination of a historical narrative and a cultic deed is known also from the Greek polytheist *historiola*; technically speaking, a *historiola* is “an abbreviated narrative that is incorporated into a magical spell,”²⁸ but as David Frankfurter (among others) has shown, the term is applicable to a broader range of cultic practices and texts.²⁹ If we describe the *historiola* as “the performative transmission of power from a mythic realm articulated in narrative to the human present,”³⁰ we could say that the poems and prose texts analyzed in this essay relate to this Graeco-Roman phenomenon. It is beyond the scope of this essay to address this relation in detail, but the following poems on the binding of Isaac will show that this comparison has, at the very least, a helpful heuristic value.

Isaac Redivivus:³¹ Sacrificial Cult and the Re-Narration of the Binding of Isaac

The biblical story of the binding of Isaac enjoyed great popularity in Late Antiquity; numerous passages in verse and prose stretch beyond the events we find narrated in Genesis 22 with events, dialogues, and drama not found in the biblical passage. The centrality of the scene to the formation of Jewish and Christian identity in Late Antiquity has been singled out in many studies;³² however, the question of whether a conceptual difference exists between the prose and verse version is never fully answered. From the perspective of themes and content, one can hardly find significant differences, as both genres tell the tale in similar ways and offer similar exegetical, homiletical, and theological insights on the events. Yet there are notable differences, literary and performative: the prose compositions quote biblical verses to support their exegetical or theological claims, they are almost always fragmentary, and they usually bring several possible interpretations to the verses or events under discussion. The liturgical poems, on the other hand, are almost the opposite; only rarely do they quote biblical verses verbatim,³³ their version is much more coherent in terms of presenting conflicting traditions, and they offer a continuous narrative that supersedes the entire biblical account. Meaningful differences can be found in the realm of performance and function of the different compositions. The prose accounts have a scholarly nature and belong primarily to the rabbinic study hall, monastic circles, and the like. The liturgical poems, alternatively, belong to the house of worship and reflect a distinct performative character alongside their intellectual and didactic facets. Much like the *Seder 'avodah* and the anaphora, the liturgical poems on Isaac are not merely memorials of his sacrifice but a representation thereof that sought to involve the congregation in the sacred past, to shape the liturgical present, and to promote salvific expectations. God is reminded of the merits of Isaac and Abraham by means of the reenactment of the sacred past, or by the verbal sacrifice of Isaac by the congregation.³⁴ Here, too, we will find a similarity to the *historiola* as the poems evoke the mythical scene as a preparation for the appeal for salvation.

The first text is an anonymous Hebrew poem composed in Palestine in the fifth century. Below are some key strophes from the poem that was recited on the Day of Atonement:

Benign One, when you said to him,
 “I desire your child as a fragrant offering,”
 he rushed to fulfill the command;
 he lost no time at all.

Quickly he split the wood,
 took up the fire and the knife,
 loaded his favored one, Isaac,
 with the faggot for the burnt offering.

Then he went on to build the altar,
 stood up and placed his lamb upon it.
 He took the sword in his hand
 and took no pity at all.

The Almighty cried out to him,
 Drop your hand at once.
 Instead of your son; I desire the ram
 caught by his horns in the thicket.

O God, heed these ashes,
 credit us with the covenant,
 favor us for his binding,
 reward our self-denial,
 redeem us, Mighty One!³⁵

The poem's main concern is Abraham's hastiness, which is beautifully represented by the short verses and the frequent use of active verbs at the beginning of many verses (in the Hebrew original, of course). However, as the drama unfolds, the poem departs from the artful reworking of the biblical account and becomes, in the concluding strophe, a petitionary prayer. The appeal to God is well structured: each of the concluding verses opens with the last character of the Hebrew alphabet (in compliance with the acrostic) and follows one grammatical structure—a verb (in the future-imperative) followed by a direct object. This repetitive pattern, which is reminiscent of contemporary Hebrew mystical hymns,³⁶ intensifies the appeal, as well as the allusion to Isaac's ashes (according to some traditions, Isaac was sacrificed and later revived).³⁷ In this poem, then, we find a ritual re-narration of the sacrifice of Isaac that stands

for the biblical sacrificial narrative (which itself is about a sacrifice and its substitute), and accordingly, God is expected (one may even say, driven) to forgive and atone.

The next poem differs in style and content from the Hebrew poem; yet its cultic function is similar. In this account, written in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic and dating to the fifth or sixth century, Isaac stands at the focal point of the poem, whereas Abraham is passive. Here are selected verses from the poem:

Isaac said / to his father / "how pleasant is the altar / you built for
me, my father,
Stretch out quickly / and take your knife / while I pray / before my
Lord. . . .
This is the day / about which they will say / a father did not pity / a
son did not tarry. . . .
Blessed are you, father / they will say / I am the ram for the burnt
offering / of the living God. . . .
Like a merciless man / take up your knife / and slaughter me / lest I
shall become unclean. . . .
Give me your knife, my father / that I can touch it / I beg you / not
to defile me,
My eyes see / the woodpiles put in order / a burning fire / on the
day of my sacrifice.
Open your mouth / and say a blessing, father / I will listen / and say
amen,
My throat is stretched out / to you, father / whatever you please to
do / please do."³⁸

The poem opens in *medias res* with Isaac's praise for the "pleasant altar" and with his depiction as a conscious and active agent.³⁹ We could say that the first two lines encapsulate the poem's prime sentiment: Isaac's martyrological passion and Abraham's hesitancy.⁴⁰ In this piece, we find not only the reenacted drama but also (self-)awareness of the cultic and performative dimension of the poem. This is clearly shown in the third line, where Isaac foresees the significance of his sacrifice to later generations:⁴¹ the author of the poem puts in Isaac's mouth a prediction that later generations will tell Isaac's story. By this referential hint, the poet constitutes the verbal ritual and validates it at the same time, much as in the passage from the Babylonian Talmud quoted above. Another notable

characteristic of this poem is its proximity to Christian discourse; perhaps the best example is Isaac's declaration that he is "the sacrificial lamb of God." This idea, to be sure, is rooted in the Bible, where Isaac asks Abraham, "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" (Gen 22.7). Yet the poet's insertion of the word "God" to the verse is related to the Lamb of God in the Gospel of John 1.29. In the next verse, we encounter more sacrificial elements (paralleled in Syriac and Greek poems that I will examine below): the concern that the sacrifice will be defiled. Isaac instructs his father to slaughter him without hesitation, to make sure that the knife is legitimate, and to make a blessing before he acts. Interestingly, this Jewish Aramaic poem is very similar in content, style, and function to a Syriac poem from the second part of the fifth century.⁴² The Syriac poem is much more extensive than the Jewish Aramaic poem and covers not only the sacrifice proper but also the preceding and following events. I will focus on the description of Isaac and Abraham on the mountain:

I know, my father, / that it is coming to me / to be the lamb / for
the whole offering.
Draw near, father, / and bind me, / tie tightly / for me my bonds,
lest my limbs / should shake / and there is a blemish / in your
sacrifice. . . .
So Abraham / bound his son / carried him / and placed him on the
pyre,
He raised his eyes / up to heaven / and cried out / "Bless, O Lord";
He stretched out his hand / for his knife / and it reached / his dear's
son neck. . . .
And without mention / of your name, Abraham / an offering / shall
not be accepted.⁴³

In more than one way, this poem is very close to the Jewish Aramaic one; the figure of Isaac stands at the heart of the binding scene, the danger of defilement is spelled out, and Abraham blesses before he acts. A noteworthy feature of this poem is the declaration that "without mention / of your name, Abraham / an offering / shall not be accepted." As in the former Jewish poem, this self-referential declaration reflects the ritual function of the liturgical piece while it validates the relation between narration and sacrifice.

Unlike the former two poems, the Syriac account is more straightforward with regard to the divine intervention and Isaac's redemption at the end, although we do find in a parallel Syriac poem references to Isaac "who

dies, though alive, being wrapped in a symbol” and “Isaac, who is sacrificed, though not killed.”⁴⁴ In both cases, Isaac’s martyrdom (or semi-martyrdom) is celebrated: for the Christian audience, he is a prefiguration of Jesus; for the Jewish congregants, Isaac prefigures their own martyrs.⁴⁵

The last example is taken from a poem by the celebrated Byzantine hymnographer Romanos the Melodist. Romanos, who lived in the sixth century, was a native of Syria, and his sacred poetry is a fascinating mixture of Semitic and classic poetic models. Romanos introduced the Syro-Palestinian tradition into Byzantine culture and arguably contributed much to the formation of its liturgy.⁴⁶ Romanos dedicated one of his *kontakia* to the story of Abraham and Isaac, and even a brief look reveals its proximity to the former poems. When Romanos comes to describe the sacrifice proper, he does so in familiar ways:

O father, have you sharpened the knife for me?
 For I see the altar as a tomb, O father;
 As though in a mirror, I see you binding and slaying me.
 If, then, what I see is a true vision, tell me;
 Do not kill me against my will if you are to find
 In me, your son, your acceptable sacrifice.⁴⁷

The metaphor of the mirror here is indicative of the cultic dimension of the poem, as Derek Krueger pointed out: “Romanos the Melodist’s image of the mirror, in which Isaac sees his father binding and slaying him, serves as an apt metaphor for the whole liturgical process of biblical repetition. In a logic that applies beyond the work of this Christian poet, the recounting of the biblical narrative reflects the narrative, and thus becomes its true image. Or perhaps it is a ritualized vision of themselves that the congregants see in the mirror?”⁴⁸

From the mirror metaphor and Romanos’s declaration earlier in the poem that he wishes to imitate (*zēlōsai*) Abraham, we learn that he, too, is aware of the cultic dimension of his liturgical poem. In the next strophe, we find yet another link to the former poems. Here we find that Abraham

bound the feet and hands of the one whom he had engendered
 as he said “first I shall bind and then kill him,
 So that his movement may not prevent my quick attack.”⁴⁹

As noticed by Sebastian Brock, this statement has a close connection with the Syriac poem that we just read⁵⁰—and now, we can add, also with the

Jewish-Aramaic one. Finally, in Romanos's *kontakia*, as in the Hebrew poem that opened this part of the essay, we find a direct connection between re-narration and salvific petition in the concluding strophe of the composition:

Do not reject our prayers as vain,
 Do not slay in thy anger those for whom thou wast crucified.
 Be our intercessor, Father, to bring us to a good end,
 Thou, the Giver of all good, and Savior of our souls.⁵¹

The connection between the biblical sacrifice of Isaac and the verbal sacrifice offered by the congregation is clear. The entire narrative of this lengthy poem and the verbal reenactment of the biblical myth all come down to this petition; and, as in the past, God is entreated to forgive and reward the believers.⁵²

Conclusion

For late ancient liturgists, recitation of biblical verses and narratives was a potent religious doing. I have tried to demonstrate how the *Seder 'avodah*, the anaphora, and poems about the binding of Isaac operate in this context: they are an oral reenactment of a mythical sacrifice that is brought back to life in the liturgical present—a verbal sacrifice. The great importance of these liturgical compositions is that they reflect Christian and Jewish “ritual theories” that draw differing degrees of contrast and continuity between sacrifice and prayer, blood and word, ritual and story. It is striking that the Christian materials analyzed here do not follow the anti-Jewish tropes common in patristic literature of dismissing sacrifice as emblemizing those Jewish traditions that were rejected, superseded, or spiritualized.

The similarities between the compositions also show the importance of the comparative study of Jewish and Christian liturgical poetry from Late Antiquity. Elsewhere I have shown how similar these corpora are, in terms of their poetic, prosodic, and thematic features;⁵³ from the present discussion, we learn that these poems also share ritual, cultic, and sacrificial elements. This understanding, along with the fact that liturgy offers us a unique gateway to some of the central places where the identities of many people were molded, promises that the comparative study of Jewish and Christian liturgy in Late Antiquity will continue to shed new light on these ancient phenomena.

CHAPTER 9

Israelite Kingship, Christian Rome, and the Jewish Imperial Imagination: Midrashic Precursors to the Medieval “Throne of Solomon”

RA‘ANAN BOUSTAN

In front of the emperor’s throne there stood a certain tree of gilt bronze, whose branches, similarly gilt bronze, were filled with birds of different sizes, which emitted the songs of the different birds corresponding to their species. The throne of the emperor was built with skill in such a way that at one instant it was low, then higher, and quickly it appeared most lofty; and lions of immense size (though it was unclear if they were of wood or brass, they certainly were coated with gold) seemed to guard him, and, striking the ground with their tails, they emitted a roar with mouths open and tongues flickering. Leaning on the shoulders of two eunuchs, I was led into this space before the emperor’s presence. And when, upon my entry, the lions emitted their roar and the birds called out, each according to its species, I was not filled with special fear or admiration, since I had been told about all of these things by one of those who knew them well. Thus, prostrated for a third time in adoration before the emperor, I lifted my head, and the person whom earlier I had seen sitting elevated to a modest degree above the ground, I suddenly spied wearing different clothes and sitting almost level

with the ceiling of the mansion. I could not understand how he did this, unless perchance he was lifted up there by a pulley of the kind by which tree trunks are lifted.¹

In his astonishing description of the throne of Solomon in the imperial palace at Constantinople, the Ottonian ambassador Liudprand of Cremona (ca. 922–972 CE) bears witness to the transformation of this “scriptural object” into an actual physical manifestation of the Byzantine emperor’s claim to universal rule. Court ceremonial—and the objects and technologies through which it was enacted—had long played a crucial role in sustaining imperial power in the Roman world.² The deployment of the throne of Solomon in imperial discourse, however, encapsulates the striking rise of the figure of King Solomon to prominence in Byzantine political ideology toward the end of Late Antiquity.³ In particular, the Macedonian dynasty (867–1056) saw an intensification of interest in “relics” from biblical Israel, the possession of which were seen to lend weight to the claims of the emperor in Constantinople to participation in the sacral authority of Israelite kingship.⁴ But the “bibilicization” of imperial ideology in medieval Byzantium already had a history reaching back hundreds of years, into the sixth and early seventh century.

The Jewish population of the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity participated in the creation of Christian imperial “public culture.”⁵ Like others in the empire, they were caught up in the dense semiotic web that enveloped symbolically potent memorabilia from the distant past—whether Roman or biblical—through which power was authorized and enacted.⁶ Byzantine Jews were especially conscious of the fact that “their” Solomon had been pressed into service on behalf of Roman-Christian claims on the biblical past.⁷ As Alexei Sivertsev has recently argued, “Jewish religious culture in the Christian Roman Empire was characterized by the same combination of participation in and alienation from the dominant imperial culture as were the religious cultures of other members of the Byzantine Commonwealth(s).”⁸ Like the various competing groups of Christians in the Byzantine world, Jews also looked to biblical kingship—especially to the figures of David and Solomon—as the archetype for legitimate earthly rule.

The present chapter explores one facet of the Jewish engagement with this transimperial discourse of royal ceremonial: tracing the changing significance of the throne of Solomon in Jewish sources from the fifth to the tenth century, I argue that the image of the throne indexes the wider Jewish response to the rise of Christianized notions of kingship. An actual material throne

of Solomon did not come into use at the court at Constantinople prior to approximately the ninth or tenth century, and this icon of biblical kingship seems not to have been central to Byzantine imperial ideology or ceremonial before then. By contrast, late antique and early medieval Jewish writers produced elaborate depictions of the throne of Solomon as a mechanical device decorated with a menagerie of animated animals. These passages, found in a variety of midrashic, targumic, and narrative sources from Palestine, and later, most likely from the environs of Constantinople itself, show particular interest in the protocols of the enthronement ceremony in which the throne itself was an active participant.

It is important to note that Jewish sources do not present a uniform approach to the throne of Solomon. Instead, as we will see, this scriptural image could be used to give expression to various alternative approaches to kingship. One strand in the Jewish “throne of Solomon” literature from Late Antiquity thematizes the scrupulous restraints to be placed on kings; these texts follow the dominant view of kingship in early rabbinic literature of the third and fourth centuries, itself a reflex of the restrictive “torah of the king” (Deut 17.14–20). By contrast, the other strand explores the modalities of royal participation in divine kingship. These two literary-exegetical approaches to the throne of Solomon map closely onto the difference between “subordinated” and “sacral” conceptions of monarchy identified by Yair Lorberbaum in the biblical and rabbinic canons.⁹ Following Lorberbaum’s systematic assessment of the development of the Jewish discourse of kingship over the course of Late Antiquity, I argue that sources from the sixth century forward increasingly emphasize the sacral and cosmic aspect of the throne of Solomon. While numerous tributaries flow into the language of Christian kingship, this facet of Jewish reflection on monarchy seems to have preceded and, in important respects, prefigured the subsequent usage of the throne of Solomon in medieval Byzantine imperial ideology. But with time, the Jewish discourse of kingship increasingly echoed Byzantine-Christian idioms of royal power, especially as these were condensed in the spectacle of court ceremonial. I would suggest that this Jewish discourse about the throne shares a genealogy with the “theological-economic” paradigm that characterized late antique and medieval Christian political practice, in which liturgical acclamation and ceremonial symbol were deemed essential for the effective operation of what Giorgio Agamben calls “executive power” (*gubernatio*).¹⁰

To trace the historical trajectory of the Solomon’s throne as a discursive and material object within the Roman-Byzantine sphere, I investigate three

related but independent bodies of text: first, Hebrew and Aramaic sources compiled in the Byzantine cultural sphere during the ninth and tenth centuries; second, Byzantine-Christian writings composed or compiled at the court in Constantinople between the sixth and tenth centuries; and, finally, classical rabbinic midrashic literature produced from the fifth century to the seventh. Rather than beginning with the chronologically earliest materials, I start my investigation with the later medieval sources, both Jewish and Christian. This reverse-chronological approach will, I hope, enable my reader to see how the concerns and motifs of the medieval materials are constructed from the building blocks of the earlier midrashic traditions, while also departing from them in significant ways. It is impossible to fix with precision the dating of the compilations discussed in this chapter, as well as of the specific tradition units that are embedded in them; but when taken together, a powerful pattern emerges from these sources, disclosing the evolution of Jewish conceptions of royal power and empire as they interacted with developments in Christian politico-religious ideology.

It is not my aim to cordon off the world of late antique and medieval Byzantium from its neighboring empires to the east, whether Sasanian-Persian or, subsequently, Arab-Islamic. As Matthew Canepa has convincingly argued, the movement of ideas, practices, and objects across the boundaries of the Roman and Sasanian empires produced a shared late antique culture of court art and ceremonial; Rome and Persia were thus bound together in what Canepa terms an “agonistic exchange” of idioms of imperial power.¹¹ This circulation of goods and symbols at the hands of myriad ambassadors, travelers, and captives persisted beyond the seventh century, remaining a permanent feature of the performance and regulation of diplomatic relationships among the Latin, Byzantine, and Islamic courts.¹² Indeed, the throne of Solomon appears as a symbol of divinely sanctioned kingship in the public art and literature of the early Islamic world.¹³ Still, I believe that Jewish-Christian competition over the biblical past before the seventh century already forged some essential symbols that would come to characterize the language of political power and legitimacy that was broadly shared across the Christian and Islamic worlds of the Middle Ages.

Medieval “Throne of Solomon” Literature

I begin at the end of the story, with the medieval Jewish throne of Solomon literature. This varied, but closely interrelated, constellation of texts is constructed from earlier rabbinic sources, yet it also responds to novel developments within Byzantine-Christian political discourse.

Versions of the throne of Solomon materials are preserved in numerous recensions in Hebrew and Aramaic and are found throughout targumic and midrashic corpora.¹⁴ These midrashim and targumim are often, but not always, commentaries on or translations of the biblical book of Esther.¹⁵ Some versions found their way into the medieval manuscript tradition; others have been recovered from among the fragments of the Cairo Genizah.¹⁶ This throne literature has not been studied in a comprehensive fashion since the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, when it was primarily approached from within a pan-Babylonianist framework as a reflex of Oriental traditions of kingship.¹⁷ No evidence exists before the seventh century for the fully elaborated form of the throne of Solomon tradition that flourished in the medieval period. *Targum sheni* to Esther—if its most recent editor is correct in assigning it a provenance in seventh- to early eighth-century Palestine—may preserve the earliest extant form of the medieval throne tradition.¹⁸

The most comprehensive collection of throne materials is preserved in an unadorned sixteenth-century manuscript in Spanish semicursive hand, presently housed in Munich. This manuscript, which was first identified and published by J. Perles in the nineteenth century, contains an elaborate composition that the scribe titled “The Throne and Hippodrome of King Solomon” (*Kise’ ve-ipodromin shel Shelomo ha-melekh*).¹⁹ This composition combines a number of discrete sources into an unusual amalgamation of literary traditions; some of these units are drawn directly from earlier midrashic and targumic texts, often in embellished form; other portions of the text are wholly unparalleled. Most notably, the scribe set overlapping versions of the throne materials in both Hebrew and Aramaic alongside a unique textual unit that models the proceedings and rituals of the Hippodrome of Solomon’s Jerusalem on those of medieval Constantinople, with its intertwined political and cosmological symbolism.²⁰

Fifty years ago, Evelyne Ville-Patlagean argued that the “Hippodrome of Solomon” was produced in tenth-century Byzantium, perhaps specifically in the sphere of the imperial court at Constantinople.²¹ Ville-Patlagean

emphasized the direct linguistic affinities that this composition has with the language used in descriptions of the court protocols contained in *The Book of Ceremonies* compiled under Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos (r. 913–959).²² Even more than the throne traditions, the Hippodrome of Solomon attests the ongoing engagement of Jewish writers with Greek literary culture well into the medieval period.

While Ville-Patlagean's dating is valid for the final redaction of the Hebrew "Throne and Hippodrome" materials in the Munich manuscript, I believe her approach has led her to contextualize the Jewish Solomon traditions too narrowly. Her synchronic analysis does not sufficiently appreciate the degree to which this Hebrew composition and its Greek analogues in *The Book of Ceremonies* preserve older strata. Recent work by a number of Byzantine historians has emphasized the self-consciously antiquarian nature of *The Book of Ceremonies* as well as Constantine's literary project more generally.²³ A dialectical tension between traditionalism and innovation characterizes these tenth-century sources; their composer-redactors reworked older materials to render them timeless, and thus authoritative, repositories of imperial practice. This process of redeployment did not produce uniform texts but rather multilayered compositions requiring careful sifting. *The Book of Ceremonies*, therefore, does not provide a secure metric against which the language of the Hebrew and Aramaic throne literature can reliably be dated.

More important, just like this Byzantine-Greek court literature, the Hebrew "Throne and Hippodrome of Solomon" found in the Munich manuscript (designated "Text B" by Ville-Patlagean) incorporates and embellishes extensive passages already found in earlier midrashic literature from the late fifth century to the early seventh. In this regard, Ville-Patlagean's approach to this composition as unified work and her emphasis on its medieval context do not accurately describe its gradual textual formation. The medieval throne literature builds upon well-established rabbinic interpretation of the various biblical descriptions of the throne of Solomon (1 Kgs 10.18–20; 2 Chron 9.17–19; also 1 Chron 28.5, 29.23), especially as these traditions developed over the course of Late Antiquity. Novel units that thematize the sacral nature of royal authority and the ritual power of the enthronement ceremony are set alongside and, indeed, used to reframe older traditions in which the throne functions as a check on who might possess *imperium*.

The Magnaura between the Sixth and Tenth Centuries

A brief survey of Byzantine Christian sources from the sixth century to the tenth indicates that the throne of Solomon entered Byzantine imperial ideology and practice only late in this period. The belated adoption of the throne as a ceremonial image of power in Christian discourse contrasts sharply with the prevalence of this potent symbol in the Jewish literary and artistic culture of late Roman Palestine.

The existence of an actual throne of Solomon at the Byzantine court is first attested in the tenth-century *Book of Ceremonies* as well as in the contemporaneous eyewitness account of the Ottonian diplomat Liudprand of Cremona.²⁴ These sources locate the throne of Solomon in the Great Triklinos of the Magnaura Palace, the hall where imperial receptions of foreign embassies took place. Like the thrones from which late antique emperors—Roman or Persian—had earlier greeted foreign visitors, the throne of Solomon in the Magnaura stood as a material projection of the universal claims of Byzantine imperial power over all the peoples of the *oikoumene*.²⁵

Despite continuities in the symbolic function of the Magnaura from the sixth century to the tenth, this audience hall—along with the imperial palace more generally—experienced continuous changes in its topographic arrangement and interior design throughout this period.²⁶ Significantly, one description of the throne of Solomon found in *The Book of Ceremonies* characterizes it as “newly constructed” (*tōi neokataskeuastōi senzōi*).²⁷ This phrase strongly suggests that the throne had existed for, at most, a couple of generations at that point and quite likely dates to no earlier than the reign of Leo VI (r. 887–912).²⁸

A comparison of the description of the throne of Solomon in the tenth-century sources with earlier sixth-century descriptions of the imperial throne in the Magnaura confirms its relatively late construction. According to the most elaborate description of the throne in *The Book of Ceremonies*, after the “foreigner” is ushered into the Magnaura and while a court official has begun formally questioning him regarding his origins and mission,

the lions begin to roar and the birds, those on the throne as well as those in the trees, begin to sing harmoniously; and the animals on the throne rise from their places on the steps. Whilst this is happening, the foreigner’s gift is brought in by the Protonotarios of

the Course. And again after a short time the organs cease, and the lions are silent, the birds stop singing and the animals on the throne resume their usual places. After the gift has been presented, the foreigner . . . prostrates himself and withdraws; and as he goes out the organs sound, and the lions and the birds all utter their own voices, and all the animals rise from their places on the steps. And when the foreigner goes out through the curtain, the organs and the birds cease, and the animals resume their usual places.²⁹

This description dovetails nicely with Liudprand's report cited at the beginning of this essay. Although the throne is here not said to elevate the emperor to the ceiling when the visitor prostrates before him, both passages specifically mention the presence of lions and birds and highlight the sounds and movements of these animal automata. In addition, the birds appear to be placed on the throne as well as on the branches of a tree that formed a portion of the hydraulic system that powered the apparatus.³⁰

If by the tenth century, the throne of Solomon had come to dominate the imperial protocol of the Magnaura, this space had been radically transformed from its sixth-century origins. In his poems of praise for Emperor Justin II (r. 565–578), the panegyrist Corippus provides compelling evidence that the throne set up in the Magnaura in its earliest phase of construction in the sixth century is not to be identified with the later throne of Solomon. In the course of his account of Justin II's reception of an Avar embassy, Corippus offers a detailed *ekphrasis* of the emperor enthroned in the Magnaura:

A lofty hall stands in the huge building gleaming with a sun of metal, wondrous in its appearance, and more wondrous in the aspect of the place and proud of its splendour. The imperial throne ennobles the inmost sanctum, girded with four marvelous columns over which in the middle a canopy shining with liquid gold, like the vault of the curving sky, shades over the immortal head and throne of the emperor as he sits there—the throne adorned with jewels and proud with purple and gold. It had curved four bending arches into itself. A similar Victory held the right side and the left side, hanging high into the air on extended wings, stretching out in her shining right hand a crown of laurel. (*In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris* 3.191–204)³¹

Corippus's description of the throne in the Magnaura offers no indication that this throne bears iconographic or technological affinities to the later throne of Solomon. And, while Corippus may admittedly make little use of Old Testament allusions, he elsewhere invokes the widespread comparison between the Hagia Sophia and Solomon's Temple (*iam Salomoniaci sileat descriptio templi*).³² It is likely that he would have used Solomonian imagery in his description of the throne in the Magnaura if it had carried such potent associations.

We know that the function of the Magnaura remained relatively stable from the sixth century to the tenth, primarily functioning as the reception hall for foreign envoys. References in *The Book of Ceremonies* to thrones other than the throne of Solomon occupying this space suggest that these older imperial seats remained in use long after their initial construction.³³ Despite significant continuities from the sixth century to the tenth in the function of the Magnaura, it would seem that the Byzantines did not yet capitalize upon—or even perceive—the ideological potential of this powerful scriptural icon until the medieval period.

The Throne of Solomon as Midrashic Icon: Between Limited and Cosmic Kingship

Rabbinic approaches to the biblical throne of Solomon shifted significantly over the course of Late Antiquity. The earlier rabbinic sources that elaborate on this biblical image use descriptions of the throne's design and operation to highlight the severe limitations that should be placed on royal power. By contrast, midrashic and targumic sources from the sixth and seventh centuries increasingly downplay this "disciplinary-pedagogical" function of the throne in favor of an emphasis on the throne's heavenly resonances; this cosmic or sacral dimension of the throne imbues its royal occupant with quasi-divine powers. This shift can best be explained as a Jewish reaction to the gradual "biblicization" of Roman imperial ideology in the sixth century. Significantly, however, in asserting their claim to biblical kingship, the Jewish authors who crafted these pointed depictions of Solomon's throne and its rightful royal occupant also produced novel symbols of divine legitimacy that would later become central elements of medieval Byzantine court ceremonial.

Any study of the "reception" of the throne of Solomon in postbiblical Jewish, Christian, or Islamic cultures must contend with the scriptural origins of

this object. The Hebrew Bible describes the throne in considerable detail. Nevertheless, late antique depictions of the throne diverge in consistent and significant ways from the biblical source text. In this late antique context, the image of the throne came to carry two distinct valences: on the one hand, it could serve as an icon of the cosmic and universal power of the king or emperor; on the other, it could index the sharply limited nature of human kingship, governed as it was by Deuteronomic restrictions on royal privilege and perquisite.³⁴

The books of 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles make repeated mention of the throne, integrating it into their articulation of Israelite royal ideology. The Chronicler, in particular, is deeply invested in the notion that the human king of Israel embodies the kingship of God.³⁵ This aspect of the political ideology of Chronicles is most fully captured in the explicit identification of Solomon's throne with the throne of God: "Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord" (1 Chron 29.23; cf. 2 Chron 9.8, 13.8). Unsurprisingly, the description of the throne emphasizes the incomparable nature of Solomon's dominion: "The king also made a great ivory throne, and overlaid it with pure gold. The throne had six steps and a footstool of gold, which were attached to the throne, and on each side of the seat were arm rests and two lions standing beside the arm rests, [19] while twelve lions stood there, one on each end of a step on the six steps. The like of it was never made in any kingdom" (2 Chron 9.17–19, RSV; cf. 1 Kgs 10.18–20). Although Solomon is not unique among the kings of Israel, his throne stands within the text as a verbal icon of the Chronicler's royal theology.

Rabbinic interpreters in the late Roman period wrestled mightily with the image of Solomon and the significance of his opulent spending and numerous marriages for formulating their conception of monarchical—or, perhaps better, imperial—power. From the earliest stratum of rabbinic writings and throughout Late Antiquity, we find repeated criticism of Solomon. A particularly provocative teaching, attributed to the late third-century Palestinian sage R. Levi, synchronizes the founding of the city of Rome with Solomon's exogamous marriage to the daughter of Pharaoh Neco:

- A. R. Levi said: On the day that Solomon married [into the family] of Pharaoh Neco King of Egypt, Michael descended and stuck a reed into the sea, which drew up mud, and it created a big hut, and this is the great city that is in Rome.
- B. On the day that Jeroboam set up the two golden calves, Romus and Romilus came and built two huts in Rome.

- C. On the day that Elijah was taken away, a king was established in Rome—[for it says], *There was no king in Edom; a deputy was king* (1 Kgs 22.48). (y^zAZ 1.2, 39c)³⁶

This tradition, formulated more than half a millennium after the myth of Romulus and Remus had crystallized, combines elements of Roman mythology with long-standing Jewish exegetical and polemical traditions.³⁷ At the same time, the rabbinic tradition situates these motifs within the chronological framework of the biblical narrative, drawing a causal relationship between the dynamics of sin and punishment in Jewish history and Rome's divinely sanctioned rise to power.

Just as Solomon's marriage to a foreign woman is presented as triggering a disruption in "Jewish" political power, other rabbinic sources likewise represent his excessive accumulations of wealth and horses as the ultimate causes behind the fracturing of Israelite kingship and kingdom.³⁸ This censure of Solomon's conduct also lies behind rabbinic teachings found in the Babylonian Talmud regarding the reversal of fortune that befell the king in his lifetime. Building on a dictum attributed to the third-century Palestinian amora Resh Lakish that "at first Solomon reigned over the upper realms . . . but in the end reigned over the lower realms," these traditions assert that Solomon lost his initial seat in heaven on God's own throne and had the scope of his power diminished step by step until he was left to wander the world in disgrace.³⁹ As Lorberbaum notes, these midrashic homilies "may be read not only as a criticism of Solomon's personality but also, primarily, as a criticism of the theological-political outlook underlying his monarchy, marked by the seal of royal theology."⁴⁰

Late antique rabbis reinterpreted the symbolic resonances invested in the throne of Solomon by the biblical text. Rather than using the throne to highlight the sacral dimension of kinship articulated by the Chronicler, rabbinic literature up through the fifth century uses it as a vehicle for articulating what the rabbis deemed proper limitations on royal privilege and thus the necessary conditions for legitimate rule. In the fifth-century Pesikta de-Rav Kahana (PRK), we find one of the earliest examples of what might best be described as a midrashic "ritual of enthronement." Because of the richness and complexity of this passage, I cite it here in full:

And [the princes] brought their offerings before the Lord, six wagons, etc. (Num 7.3), corresponding to the six days of creation; six,

corresponding to the six orders of the Mishnah; six, corresponding to the six matriarchs. . . . According to R. Yoḥanan, the six corresponds to the six commandments which a king is bound to obey: *He shall not multiply wives to himself* (Deut 17.17); *he shall not multiply horses to himself* (Deut 17.16); *neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold* (Deut 17.17); *you shall not wrest judgment; you shall not respect persons; neither shall you take a gift* (Deut 16.19).

In further comment, the six correspond to the six steps of the king's throne (cf. 1 Kgs 10.19). What significance did each step have?

When the king set foot on the first step as he was going up to his seat, a herald came forth and cried: *He shall not multiply wives to himself*. When the king set foot on the second step as he was going up to his seat, a herald came forth and cried: *He shall not multiply horses to himself*. When the king set foot on the third step, a herald came forth and cried: *Neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold*. When he set foot on the fourth step, a herald came forth and cried: *You shall not wrest judgment*. When he set foot on the fifth step, a herald came forth and cried: *You shall not respect persons*. When he set foot on the sixth step, a herald came forth and cried: *Neither shall you take a gift*. And when he was about to sit down, after having set foot on the seventh step, he was told: Know before whom you are about to sit down. *And the top of the throne was round behind* (1 Kgs 10.19) means, according to R. Aḥa, that the throne resembled the seat of Moses. *And there were arms on either side of the throne by the place of the seat* (1 Kgs 10.19). How was the throne decorated? A golden scepter was suspended behind it, and on top of the scepter was a dove. In the dove's mouth there was a crown of gold, and when the king sat under it on the seat of the throne, the crown all but touched his head. (PRK 1)⁴¹

The description of the king's throne and its protocols culminates a series of lists of six items—people, texts, or objects—that are said to correspond to the six wagons that the “princes of Israel” offered for use in the Tabernacle after its completion (Num 7.3). The six steps of the throne, in turn, correspond to the composite list of six commandments drawn from Deuteronomy 16 and 17. The PRK passage represents one dominant strand in the throne of Solomon literature, in which the throne participates in a ritual enactment of the king's subordination to divine authority. By ascending each step, the king assents

to the strictures imposed on kingship, not only regarding wives, horses, and wealth, but also in his capacity as judge. This same scene is replayed, in countless variations, in the subsequent late antique and early medieval versions of the throne literature.⁴²

Yet the regulatory function of the throne was not always used to raise critical concerns about unchecked power. In other cases, the throne of Solomon was instead harnessed for the purposes of competitive historiography, as a symbol of the Israelite origins of universal rule, and, by extension, as an indication of the belated nature of those more recent empires that may lay claim to it. A passage in *Esther Rabbah* (1.12), the earliest sustained midrashic commentary on the book, traces the historical vagaries of the throne of Solomon as it is transferred from one hegemonic power to the next, from Egypt to Ethiopia to Babylonia to Persia to Greece and, finally, to Rome.⁴³ Yet, despite its wanderings, the throne is an active agent in its own fate: the animal figures carved upon it, such as lions and eagles, quite literally participate in the elevation of Solomon to the throne, while barring and, in some reflexes of the tradition, even maiming illegitimate claimants (*EsthR* 1.12).⁴⁴ The text reports that, although Kings Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus were able to sit on the throne, Ahasuerus was not permitted to do so because “no king who is not ruler over the whole world (*kosmokrator*) can sit on it”⁴⁵—Ahasuerus must instead arrange to have a paltry copy of the throne constructed for his personal use.⁴⁶ Significantly, the throne does not operate here as a pedagogical mechanism, nor does it subordinate the king to God, nor, finally, does it differentiate between “Israelite” and “foreign” rulers. Rather, the throne serves as a winnowing tool to separate mere kings from those who can legitimately claim to be the sole universal ruler of their age.

The discourse of competitive historiography in this passage is further heightened by the cosmic symbolism that it builds into the design of the throne. The description of the throne in *Esther Rabbah* goes well beyond the version in *Pesikta de-Rav Kahana* discussed above. Here the six steps leading up to the throne do not just correspond to the six days of creation, the six matriarchs, and the six orders of the *Mishnah*, but also to the six heavens and the six earths.⁴⁷ Moreover, *Esther Rabbah* explicitly claims that Solomon’s throne was modeled on the divine chariot-throne from Ezekiel’s vision of the *merkavah* (Ezekiel 1 and 10). In the context of a passage that traces the subordination of Israel to a succession of world empires, this cosmic imagery has a powerful political thrust. In Sivertsev’s apt formulation: “The midrash portrays Solomon as more than just Israel’s greatest king. He is also the archetypal

world ruler, the *cosmocrator*, modeled after Roman and Byzantine emperors but introduced as their forerunner.⁴⁸

This cosmic symbolism, found in some fifth- and especially sixth-century midrashic texts, became more pronounced in the later medieval versions of the enthronement scene. Most striking is the elaboration on this theme in the “Throne and Hippodrome of Solomon,” which, I have argued above, was produced in ninth- or tenth-century Constantinople.⁴⁹

The sages said: “King Solomon ruled over the heavenly and earthly realms, as it is said: *Then Solomon sat upon the throne of Yahweh*” (1 Chron 29.23). R. Yoḥanan said: “Is it the case that [Solomon] sat upon the throne of Yahweh? Rather, the Holy One, blessed be he, enthroned and empowered him over the heavenly and earthly realms. And he made him a throne in the earthly realms in the form of the throne of glory (*demut kise’ ha-kavod*) that is in the heavenly realms: just as the throne in the heavenly realms is in the form of the four *ḥayot*—human, lion, bull, and eagle—so, too, is the throne of Solomon in the form of human, lion, bull, and eagle.” R. Ḥiyya taught: “[It was] in the form of the throne of glory (*demut kise’ ha-kavod*) that Solomon made his throne with the holy spirit: the form of the wheel and the *keruvim* behind the throne; and he set up the form of the *ḥayot* and the *ofanim* before the throne. And sixty warriors [cf. Song 3.7] were affixed there and upon its forehead were the sixty letters of the *yevarekhekhā*” (= Num 6.24–26).⁵⁰

This unit consists of a series of midrashic expansions—pseudepigraphically attributed to early rabbinic authorities—of the Chronicler’s articulation of the ideology of sacral kingship discussed above. This passage represents the earthly throne of Israelite kingship as a replica or icon (*demut*) of the *merkavah*, its heavenly prototype.⁵¹ I would suggest that the medieval “Throne and Hippodrome of Solomon” seeks to neutralize earlier rabbinic critiques of kingship. Against that narrative of Solomon’s decline, this text insists on eternal parity between the heavenly and earthly thrones.

To my knowledge, the most striking parallel to this feature of the “Throne and Hippodrome of Solomon” is found in another relatively late text, Exodus Rabbah.⁵² Here, in a passage that presents an extended comparison between the rise and decline of the Israelite monarchy and the cycles of the moon, the midrash likens the scope of Solomon’s royal power to God’s and his throne

to the divine chariot (*merkavah*). The portion of this lengthy and otherwise unparalleled text most relevant for our purposes reads:

Is it possible for a man to sit upon the throne of the Holy One, blessed be he, of whom it is said, *his throne was fiery flame* (Dan 7.9)? Rather, just as the Holy One, blessed be he, rules from one end of the world to the other and rules over all the kings, as it is said, *all the kings of the world shall praise you, O Lord* (Ps 138.4), so, too, did Solomon's [rule extend] from one end of the earth to the other, as it is said, *All the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon* (2 Chron 9.23). . . . Concerning the throne of the Holy One, blessed be he, it is written, *As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man, the face of a lion* (Ezek 1.10), and regarding Solomon it is written, *And on the panels that were set in the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim* (1 Kgs 7.29), and another verse says, *they were made like the wheels of the chariot-throne* (1 Kgs 7.33). . . . The Holy One, blessed be he, made six heavens and he dwells in the seventh, even as concerning the throne of Solomon, it is written, *six steps to the throne* (1 Kgs 10.19) and he sits upon the seventh step. (ExodR 15.26)⁵³

The series of equivalences established in this passage between divine and human kingship culminates with a detailed juxtaposition of the language of the *merkavah* of Ezekiel and what the text implicitly presents as a description of the throne of Solomon. Of course, the verses from 1 Kings 7 cited in the midrash do not refer to the king's throne (described in 1 Kings 10) but to the bases and wheels of the ten lavers that he had constructed. Still, the text presses into service these evocative parallels between God's chariot/throne and the cultic vessels placed in the courtyard of the temple built by Solomon, in order to drive home the principle of sacral kingship. Midrashic passages like this one, along with the "Throne and Hippodrome of Solomon," suggest that that rabbinic (or, perhaps better, post-rabbinic) authors from the sixth century on began to free the image of Solomon's throne from the disciplinary-pedagogical role with which it had been associated in earlier rabbinic sources. It would appear that this trend intensified in the midrashic literature of the early Middle Ages.

Conclusion

Late antique Jews cultivated literary and ideological resources with which to reflect on the political power and legitimacy of the empires in which they lived. In the case of Solomon's throne, we have seen that these idioms were subsequently given fuller expression in the official imperial ideology of the Byzantine court at Constantinople. This process attests the parallel and mutual development of political and thus cultural identity that characterized the late Roman and Byzantine world more broadly. Artifacts and ideologies were acquired, appropriated, and mediated—in short, circulated—across ethnic, linguistic, and religious communities that made up Byzantine society. Despite important differences, the various post-Roman polities that were heirs to the late antique world constituted a broad semiotic community whose shared idioms of political legitimacy and power were mutually intelligible.⁵⁴

But mutual intelligibility came with a cost. For late Roman and Byzantine Christians, Jews and Jewish culture occupied an especially fraught place in this economy of signs. The long-standing associations of the Old Testament with contemporaneous living Jewish communities made the increasing biblicization of Roman imperial ideology a fraught and ambivalent process; insofar as Christians understood the biblical and the Jewish pasts to be inextricably intertwined, the Jew came to occupy a (dis)privileged position within Christian discourses of self-definition.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the ceremonial, liturgical, and acclamatory practices that performatively authorized the exercise of Christian rule, in the medieval period and afterward, share a genealogy with the discourse of kingship that was cultivated by Jews within the domain their own imperial imagination.

PART III

Continuity and Rupture

THE ESSAYS IN Part III cover the entirety of the period encompassed by the volume, as seen from the perspective of different types of data: liturgical poetry, documentary papyri, iconography and religious architecture, and polemical literature and legislation. That different genres and corpora can open different perspectives on Jewish life under Roman rule is first demonstrated by Michael Swartz, who situates the transmission of tradition and authority depicted in the mishnaic tractate *Avot* 1 and the liturgical *piyutim* for the Day of Atonement in a broader Roman context shaped by competing claims to the emblems of continuity in Hellenistic mythology and the succession lists of Hellenistic scholasticism. Whereas earlier studies have been content to compare Jewish and Christian approaches by comparing *Avot* with Irenaeus, Swartz recovers a more variegated continuum of expression, including differing Christian perspectives on priesthood. If the '*Avodah piyutim* cannot be isolated from their cultural context in a Christianized Roman Palestine, however, neither can they be reduced to a reaction to Christianity. Increased interest in priestly lineage in Jewish sources from the fifth and sixth centuries may be partly "a result of the dissolution of the patriarchate and the consolidation of Byzantine authority," but the poets were most concerned "with the more proximate rhetorical claims to leadership, as exemplified in *Avot* and its parallels." What was at stake was precisely what some rabbis sought to displace: "a form of cultic piety . . . in which the priesthood was valued, and perhaps even represented, in the ancient synagogue."

Hannah Cotton focuses on four Jewish marriage documents: *P.Yadin* 18 and 65 and *P.Nessana* 18 and 20. The documents, all written in Greek under Roman rule, bear no sign of rabbinic influence, relying instead on local custom. The first two do so with appeal to *nomos Hellēnikos*, thus reminding us that "the advent of Rome brought with it a considerable intensification of the process of Hellenization in the Near East, as attested in the written corpus as well as in material culture." Documentary and other material data, however, caution against interpreting this "Hellenization" solely in the sense of the Greek *paideia* so prominent in the elite literary sources; after all, as Cotton reminds us, Hellenism always names a cultural composite—an ever-shifting admixture of "Hellenic" and local cultures.

In the technical phrasing of the legal cases here, we witness the long history of the coexistence of a Roman *nomos* authority and a perduring Aramaic

inheritance. The evidence of documentary papyri enables us to glimpse rhythms of local practice so often effaced in elite writings, but it also presents different challenges: “[A] gap of 380 years,” Cotton stresses, “separates the latest legal document in the Babatha archive . . . from the first safely dated legal contract from Nessana.” Nonetheless, her analysis of the marriage documents from Nessana points to a remarkable continuity. The most notable difference is the framing of the practice: in the sixth-century documents, local custom is no longer called *nomos Hellēnikos* but *ethos Rōmaikon*. The four Jewish legal documents may not conform to rabbinic norms, but neither do they reflect purely Greek or Roman law; what is framed as Greek and, later, Roman is a system “heavily diluted with local legal provisions.” Such evidence can serve as a check on the reconstruction of the history of Jewish law and the history of Roman law.

Just as liturgical, legal, and documentary evidence sheds new light on standard historical narratives, so does the art that remains. Rina Talgam illuminates the delicate dynamics of Jewish and Christian differentiation as it operates between the biblical past and the Roman present. Like Münz-Manor, Talgam points to the persisting power of sacrificial imagery for centuries after the destruction of the Second Temple. Her analysis of synagogue and church iconography uncovers the palimpsest of Tabernacle, Temple, and Jerusalem present and past, and it shows how biblical traditions remained a touchstone for late antique reflection on the potency of buildings for communal worship—with the ambivalence of nostalgia for a lost sacrificial past balanced with the proclamation of a triumphal present or with the anticipation of a future with a restored Temple or Jerusalem.

That the shifting political fate of Jerusalem had effects on its iconographical depiction is made especially clear by Talgam’s analysis of mosaics from the diocese of Madaba from the sixth century to the eighth. The famous Madaba map, in her reading, reflects debates about pilgrimage and thus preserves some “conceptions of the Promised Land and Jerusalem that took shape when Jerusalem was a pagan city,” along with a sense of its changed landscapes after Constantine. Whereas this map invokes the geography of the biblical past in the age of Christian Rome, the mosaic at the Church of Saint Stephen at Umm al-Rasas depicts the Christian present in an age after the Islamic conquest, when Umayyad administrative changes were remaking the region. As with Boustan’s throne imagery, the march of empires leaves braided traces in the religious record; after the cessation of Byzantine rule over Palestine, the

image of Christian Jerusalem at the heart of Christian Rome joins nostalgia for the biblical Jerusalem, as well as memories of the Roman conquest and erasure of a Jewish Jerusalem, in the region's sacred geography and artistic repertoire.

The final essay in this volume brings us westward, tracing trajectories of continuity and rupture into the Middle Ages. Paula Fredriksen traces the *contra Iudaeos* tradition from its literary and heresiological origins to its enshrinement in social reality. The *contra Iudaeos* tradition was first forged in the crucible of biblical interpretation, Hellenistic *paideia*, and Roman public disputation, and it was marshaled most intensively against "heretics." As we have seen in the studies of Irshai and Sivan, moreover, such rhetoric flourished in the immediate wake of Constantine's conversion, concurrent with the intensification of intra-Christian debate.

Providing yet another example of the importance of legal discourse for the dynamics of provincial and imperial power examined in the volume, Fredriksen explores the importation of this Christian rhetorical tradition into Roman imperial law: the new repressive Christian language simultaneously marks the Jews as "un-Roman" but preserves continuity with earlier Roman policies safeguarding Jewish religious prerogatives. If such a context helps make sense of Augustine's doctrine of Jewish witness, it also highlights the stark difference with the situation two centuries later with Isidore of Seville, living in the wake of the dissolution of Rome's power in Spain after invasions by Vandals, Goths, Sueves, and Franks. The elusive signifieds of the *contra Iudaeos* tradition undergo yet another involution in the later law, where Jews and "heretics" exchange places yet again, as Isidore argues for the forced conversion of the former by marshaling Augustinian arguments originally framed against the latter. Much of Rome may be gone in Visigothic Spain, but the *contra Iudaeos* tradition remains, with tragic effects; just as the age of Christianization was marked by the persistence of Romanization, so this post-Roman age is shaped by the belated effects of Christianization, with the rhetoric of the *contra Iudaeos* tradition finally remaking reality.

Significantly, for our purposes, Fredriksen's essay pivots on the problem of poetics. How can we get to late antique Jews when the "rhetorical Jew," as Fredriksen notes, "figures prominently as a constitutive element of orthodox identity" in intra-Christian debates? Christians draw on the power of language to remake Rome, but their powerful language "hinders the effort to see in the surviving literature the actual beliefs, concerns, circumstances, and social

behaviors of ideologically warring contemporaries.” Even imperial legislation cannot be conflated with descriptive social history. We are left to ponder the clues in inscriptional and other evidence that hint at a “continuing religious fluidity in the late Roman world . . . that neither episcopal nor imperial writings prepare us to see.”

Chains of Tradition from *Avot* to the *‘Avodah Piyutim*

MICHAEL D. SWARTZ

An important component of the rabbinic ideology of Torah is the idea of a “chain of tradition” by which God taught Torah to Moses, who then passed it down through a succession of biblical and Second Temple sages to present-day rabbis. This myth is expressed most famously in chapter 1 of the Mishnah tractate *Avot*: “Moses received Torah at Sinai and handed it down to Joshua, Joshua to the elders, the elders to the prophets, and the prophets handed it down to the Men of the Great Assembly” (mAvot 1.1–2.16). The Mishnah goes on to quote three sayings of the Men of the Great Assembly and continues the succession of transmission through Second Temple sages to the rabbis of late second century CE, quoting sayings by each.¹ This passage is a key argument in the validation of rabbinic authority. By arguing that rabbinic law and culture are the product of a continuous process by which one generation of disciples received their instruction from their teachers going back to Sinai, *Avot* links the authority of the current generation of rabbis with the original act of revelation. In addition, the agency of each group or individual named is bound up with the source of revelation by the use of those very quotations. This myth has implications not only for rabbinic theology but for how the rabbis sought to function as leaders within Jewish society as well.²

Yet there are alternative versions to this motif in Jewish sources of Late Antiquity. In magical and medical texts, the specialized book or divine name is transmitted from one person to another in an esoteric chain of tradition until

it reaches the reader.³ Such chains are most prominent in Hekhalot literature,⁴ magical manuals such as *Sefer ha-razim*,⁵ and the Hebrew medical manual *The Book of Medicines of Asaph the Physician* (*Sefer ha-refu'ot le-Asaf ha-Rofe*).⁶ In those cases, this motif is used to validate the extra-canonical text or tradition that the book or magician is recommending.⁷

This study concerns another variation of this motif, in which it is applied to the priesthood and the institution of sacrifice in the ancient Temple. In several sources, the cult and especially its personnel are traced from creation through the patriarchs, Levites, and Aaronides, through the Second Temple priests. Among the most cohesive and significant of these sources is the *'Avodah piyutim*, the liturgical poems that describe the sacrifice in the Temple on Yom Kippur in intricate poetry. These poems were composed between the third century and the seventh. They present the history of Israel—from its origins in primeval and patriarchal history to its establishment as a nation—as a succession of cultic heroes that inevitably leads to the election of Aaron and his descendants as priests. It will be argued here that this picture of succession stands in marked contrast to the rabbinic chain of tradition as set out in the tractate *Avot* and other texts and that this topic has implications for the structure of Jewish society in the imperial context of Late Antiquity.⁸ To do this, we must understand the role of chains of tradition in the Mediterranean world.

The Priestly Chain of Tradition

The chain of tradition motif follows a common Hellenistic rhetorical pattern. Henry Fischel showed that the Jewish motif of the chain of tradition is based on the *sorites*, a topos found in Greek literature that traces political or intellectual authority through its channels of transmission.⁹ The prototypical example of this motif is the scepter of Agamemnon in the *Iliad* (2.100–109), which was originally fashioned by Hephaestus, god of fire, and passed down through a succession of leaders to Agamemnon.¹⁰ As Fischel points out, Eusebius, quoting Clement of Alexandria, maps out apostolic succession in similar terms.¹¹ This motif was part of the rhetorical currency of intellectual life in the ancient Mediterranean. Fischel argues that the chain of tradition in *Avot* “reflected the purposes of the Graeco-Roman models, i.e., not only to illustrate the route of transmission but also to ascertain the authentic possession of the god-derived object and with it, the legitimate claim of its possessors to rule.”¹² Amram

Tropper, in his study of *Avot*, takes this analysis further by placing its chain of tradition in the context of the Second Sophistic of the first few centuries CE.¹³ Tropper sees the redaction of the succession lists in *Avot* as the product of a patriarchate interested in advancing its authority rhetorically by linking it with a scholastic tradition going back to Israel's classical age.¹⁴ Daniel Boyarin argues that the chain of tradition in *Avot* was formulated in response to, or at least consecutively with, the formation of Christian orthodoxy, to which Christian succession lists contributed.¹⁵ Tropper, however, argues that both drew on a larger Graeco-Roman literary and rhetorical pattern, and that the polytheistic antecedents to this rhetorical strategy should be given at least as much weight as the early Christian parallels in explaining the origin and purpose of the rabbinic chain of tradition.¹⁶

Whatever their relationship to the chain of tradition in *Avot*, the persistence of succession lists in early Christian literature shows that this literary pattern and the ideological assumptions that accompany it were part of the cultural atmosphere of Late Antiquity well into the Christianization of the Roman Empire. The currency of this motif demonstrates that the construction of a narrative in which a process or body of knowledge is transmitted from one generation to another was an essential form of authorization for Jewish, Christian, and polytheistic intellectuals.¹⁷

In the case of the rabbinic chain of tradition, the selection of scholastic ancestors indicates as much by what it omits as by what it includes. As Steven D. Fraade, Moshe David Herr, and others have pointed out, the chain of tradition in *Avot* is notable for its omission of Aaron and the priesthood, indicating that its authors wished to diminish the authority of the priesthood as a class.¹⁸ Yet despite the absence of the priesthood from the chain of tradition in *Avot*, the idea of the priestly chain of tradition has antecedents in Second Temple literature and finds its way into midrash. Michael Stone has shown that in the apocryphal Levi literature and the book of Jubilees, the patriarchs are depicted as transmitting the specific knowledge of sacrificial ritual to their students, who then constitute a priestly chain of tradition.¹⁹ The Wisdom of ben Sira (44–50) traces a sacred tradition of spiritual ancestors from the early patriarchs to his own time. This procession of leaders includes judges, prophets, and kings, but the high priest Simon, the son of Yoḥanan, is praised in particular for his stewardship of the Temple, and ben Sira describes him officiating in the sacrifice in rhapsodic poetry. These chapters undoubtedly had an influence on the *ʿAvodah* service, which likewise proceeds from a history of Israel's ancestors to a description of the high priest conducting the Yom Kippur sacrifice.²⁰

A midrashic parallel to the motif of Agamemnon's scepter figures in this priestly variation of the rabbinic chain of tradition; several midrashim tell of the miraculous origin of the priestly vestments. In Gen 3.21, following Adam and Eve's expulsion from the garden, God makes skin tunics (*kotenot 'or*) for them. The rabbis find in this phrase occasion to make two wordplays. The first plays on the words for "skin" (*'or*, with the letter *'ayin*) and "light" (*'or*, with the letter *aleph*). The second is the occurrence of the word *kotenot*, which is also used to designate the priest's tunic. Genesis Rabbah states:

- A. In the Torah of Rabbi Meir, they found written [in his text of Gen 3.21] "tunics of light" (*kotenot 'or*).
- B. These were the garments of the first Adam, which were like a lantern, wide at the bottom and narrow at the top.
- C. R. Yitshak Revayah said: They were as smooth as a fingernail and as lovely as a jewel.
- D. R. Yoḥanan said: They were like the delicate linen garments that come from Bet She'an.
- E. "Tunics of skin" (*kotenot 'or*): For they clung to the skin.
- F. R. Eleazar said: They were made of goatskin.²¹
- G. R. Joshua said: They were made of rabbit skin.²²
- H. R. Yose b. R. Ḥanina said: they were made of goat hair.²³
- I. Resh Lakish said: They were milk-white,²⁴ and the firstborn used to use it.
- J. R. Samuel bar Naḥman said: They were made of camel wool and rabbit wool. They were called "garments of skin" because they came from skin.²⁵ (GenR 20.12)²⁶

Unit A states that R. Meir's copy of the Torah reads not robes of skin but robes of light. In B, R. Meir's variant is used to indicate the luminous beauty of the garment. In C–J, the interpreters offer opinions on its nature or material. Gary Anderson distinguishes between units B through E, which state that they adhered to the skin and, especially in the case of C, lent a brilliant effulgence to Adam—and units F through J, which presuppose that they were made of skins.²⁷ The former interpretations imply that Adam took the garments off when leaving Eden, and the latter imply that he put them on just before leaving Eden. As Anderson points out, the key to this latter idea is found in Resh Lakish's interpretation in I, in which he adds that the firstborn of each family used the cloak to officiate as family priest.

Midrash Tanḥuma Buber expands this idea, although it does not emend the word “skin” to “light,” as GenR did:

- A. How does Israel honor the Sabbath? With eating and drinking and clean clothes.
- B. For that is what the Holy One, blessed be he, did: “And he made tunics of skin” (Gen 3.21):
 - 1. What is a tunic of skin? High-priestly garments that the Holy One, blessed be he, dressed [him in], as he was the firstborn of the world.
- C. And further, our rabbis taught:²⁸ until the Tabernacle was erected, high places (*bamot*) were permitted and sacrifice (*‘avodah*) was performed by the firstborn.²⁹
- D. Therefore the Holy One, blessed be he, dressed Adam in garments of the high priesthood, for he was the firstborn of the world.
 - 1. Noah came and handed it down to Shem, and Shem to Abraham and Abraham to Isaac and Isaac to Esau, who was the firstborn.
 - 2. But Esau saw his wives practicing idolatry and gave it to his mother for safekeeping. Since Jacob took the birthright from Esau, it is only right that he should wear those garments, as it is said, “Rebecca took the best garments of her older son Esau” (Gen 27.15). (Tanḥuma Buber, *Toledot* 12 [p. 133])

This brief but complex tale weaves together several exegetical and literary motifs. As with many such midrashim belonging to the Tanḥuma-Yelamdenu genre, a question on a legal or ritual matter serves as an introduction to a discourse on a rather different subject. In this case, the initial premise of the midrash, set out in unit A, is the idea that Israel honor the Sabbath by wearing clean clothes. However, it soon becomes evident that its principal subject is the origin of the garments of the patriarchal priesthood. The beginning and end points (B and D2) are exegeses of two verses from Genesis that relate the garments mentioned in both scriptural verses to a single garment, a skin tunic, which is handed down from generation to generation. This tunic is identified both as the first clothing of Adam in Gen 3.21 and as the garment of Esau in which Rebecca dressed Jacob to deceive Isaac in Gen 27.15. That garment is none other than the primordial garment of the high priesthood of

the pre-Tabernacle family cult—the antecedent of Aaron’s vestments. As the garment was passed down from father to son, Isaac was deceived not simply because Rebecca had disguised Jacob as Esau but because Isaac would presume that Esau, not Jacob, would be wearing the ancestral vestment.³⁰ Here, then, we see the common form of the *sorites* applied to the priestly garment. In this alternative chain of tradition, the lineage is a priestly one and the garment serves as the potent instrument of authority. Like Agamemnon’s scepter in the *Iliad*, which was the signal of kingship deriving from the gods, the primordial cloak acts as the authorizing agent by which the chief priesthood is conferred on each successive heir.³¹

These two midrashim attest to the range of the influence of this pattern. They show that the concern with succession of authoritative figures in late antique Judaism was not confined to the transmission of Torah but extended to physical objects and ritual expertise. While the most important examples of the chain of tradition in rabbinic literature are applied to the scholastic succession of sages, the idea of a priestly succession was not unknown to the rabbis. The priesthood is included in myths of Israel’s beginnings. However, this pattern is applied to the priesthood most consistently in the *‘Avodah piyutim*, a literature that is independent of Talmud and midrash and is the product of individual authors. I will argue that in this liturgical poetry, the history of succession not only follows biblical historiography in including the priesthood but does so to foreground the priesthood’s central role in Israel’s history.

In the *‘Avodah*

The priestly vestments figure prominently in the *‘Avodah piyutim*, where they emphasize the physical splendor of the high priest.³² These liturgical poems were composed for the *‘Avodah* service, in which the sacrifice of purification for the Day of Atonement in the ancient Temple is described along the pattern set by the Mishnah tractate *Yoma*. This service grew out of a custom of reciting that tractate on Yom Kippur.³³ The earliest extant *‘Avodah* text is *Shiv‘at yamim*, in which a simplified version of the Mishnah tractate is recited.³⁴ This text is preceded by a brief introductory poem called *Atah barata*.³⁵ By the fourth or fifth century, the custom had grown into a full-fledged poetic genre with a distinct formal structure. This structure is exemplified by a few early compositions such as the anonymous *Atah konanta ‘olam me-rosh*³⁶ and the

massive *Az be-en kol*³⁷ and by several compositions by Yose ben Yose, the first *payetan* (liturgical poet) known by name.³⁸ The *ʿAvodah* was a major genre of early *piyut*, comprising the greatest number of works by Yose ben Yose and inspiring at least one other genre of *piyut*.³⁹

The *ʿAvodah* consists of two main sections. The first is an extensive poetic introduction to the description of the sacrifice, in which the history of the world, especially of Israel, is told, up to the establishment of the Tabernacle. This introduces the later priesthood, particularly the high priest, who, in the second section, is depicted performing the Yom Kippur sacrifice starting from his preparation a week before Yom Kippur to the final stage of the ceremony, when, having triumphantly emerged from the Holy of Holies, he demonstrates that Israel's sins have been forgiven and rejoins his family. The poetic preamble to the sacrifice is often as extensive as the description of the sacrifice itself and is structured in such a way as to make the history of the universe lead up to the establishment of the cult.⁴⁰ Likewise, when the ancestors of humanity and Israel are described, they lead up to Aaron and the priestly caste as well.

It is here that the *ʿAvodah* presents its equivalent of a chain of tradition. While it is not framed explicitly as a succession of transmitters of practice or lore from teachers to students, the chain of tradition is implicit in the poets' selection of the patriarchs and ancestors that represent Israel's history. It is therefore instructive to examine which details of biblical history are chosen to prefigure the cult whose description forms the body of the poems.

Atah barata, the introduction to *Shivʿat yamim* described above, probably dates from the fourth century and is the earliest liturgical example of this selection process. This brief poem, like Mishnah *Avot*, is notable for what it omits no less than for what it includes. When the patriarchs are described, the poet dwells most on the binding of Isaac in Genesis 22:

Before [Isaac] grew up,
you tested [Abraham]
when you said to him, "offer him
before me as a burnt offering."⁴¹

The poem continues for two stanzas, in which the poet depicts the angels protesting God's command to kill Isaac, a motif also found in midrash.⁴² In a later *ʿAvodah*, Yose ben Yose's *Atah konanta ʿolam be-rov hesed* (lines 59–60), the poet connects the binding of Isaac directly to Yom Kippur:

The father was glad to bind
and the son to be bound,
for by it the burdened⁴³
will be justified in judgment.

You placed a ram as his atonement,
and he was considered meritorious.
On this day⁴⁴ may we hear:
I have found ransom (Job 33.24).

This passage tells a kind of etiology of Israel's atonement. Abraham and Isaac rejoice because through their act of sacrifice, Israel will find atonement in the future. At that point, the poet turns to God, thanking him that the people can atone by means of sacrifice, and expresses his wish that on this day, too—that is, the Yom Kippur on which the poem is recited—the community will be forgiven. This passage reflects the teleological view of history prevalent in the *'Avodah*, in which aspects of creation or events in the past occur for the sake of future manifestations of God's will.⁴⁵ The narration of a story is thus related to the petitioner's present-day situation. This form bears resemblance to the *historiola*, a literary form often found in magical and esoteric texts, which employs a historical event to achieve a particular ritual goal.⁴⁶

More telling is the selection of biblical figures by the poets of the early *'Avodah piyutim*. Table 10.1 maps the ancestors of Israel and humanity at large that each *piyut* under study chooses to treat exegetically and poetically. This will illustrate how the *'Avodah* understands the succession of ideal figures.

Before describing how these poems locate the priesthood in history, a few points are worth noting. The earliest anonymous *piyutim*, *Atah barata* and *Atah konanta 'olam me-rosh*, do not mention Eve at all. Most remarkable is *Atah konanta 'olam me-rosh's* account of the expulsion from Eden:⁴⁷

You formed from the earth
a lump of soil in your image
and commanded him
concerning the tree of life.

He forsook your word,
and he was forsaken from Eden.
But you did not destroy him
for the sake of the work of your hands.⁴⁸

Eve is nowhere to be seen. However, in *Az be-en kol*, Eve is given a good deal of the blame for the sin and expulsion:

She who is snares and nets⁴⁹
 listened to the evil one,
 and the innocent one⁵⁰ was caught
 in the trap of the devious. (lines 290–91)

Likewise, in Yose ben Yose's *Az be-da'at ḥakar*, the creation of Eve is presented as a necessary evil. The *piyut* acknowledges that Adam needed a wife but also states that her creation led to Adam's downfall:⁵¹

He watched over him
 so that he would not be all alone:
 "I will make a helpmeet and teach the way
 of a man with a maid."⁵²

He cast sleep over him,
 he intoxicated him with slumber,
 and from the bone of his rib
 he prepared his undoing.⁵³ (lines 31–32)

That is, noting Adam's need for a companion, God decided to make the woman; there is obviously a sexual connotation to the poet's allusion to Prov 30.19.⁵⁴ However, the woman would prove to be Adam's "undoing." All the *piyutim* represent the Eden story as a drama of sin and punishment, an appropriate theme for Yom Kippur; however, *Az be-da'at ḥakar* adds the element of the tragic necessity of humanity's disobedience.

We now turn to how the ancestors of the priesthood and antecedents to the cult are represented in the *piyutim*. The most comprehensive *piyut* regarding the description of human history is *Az be-en kol*, which traces human prehistory and the story of the patriarchs in some detail.⁵⁵ The *piyut* devotes a good deal of attention to the Tower of Babel, the generation of Enosh, the Flood, and other episodes in the early history of humanity. In those episodes, the emphasis is on human sin and divine punishment. Thus the *piyut* stresses that the generation of Enosh had turned away from God, leading directly to their punishment by the Flood. Two stanzas link the theme of the alimentary nature of creation with that generation's sin:

Table 10.1. Biblical Figures in 'Avodah Piyutim

<i>AB</i>	<i>AKOM</i>	<i>ABK</i>	<i>AG</i>	<i>AK</i>	<i>Asaper</i>	<i>ABH</i>
Adam	Adam	Adam and Eve	Adam and Eve	Adam and Eve	Adam and Eve	Adam and Eve
		Cain and Abel	Cain and Abel	Cain and Abel	Cain and Abel	Cain and Abel
			Seth			Seth
Nephilim	Generation of the Flood	Generation of Enosh	Generation of the Flood	Generation of Enosh	Generation of Enosh	Generation of the Flood
Noah	Noah	Noah	Noah	Noah	Flood (Noah is not mentioned)	Noah and his family
		Shem, Ham, and Japheth		Descendants of Noah ("families of all creation")		
		Tower of Babel	Generation of Peleg (Tower of Babel)	Tower of Babel	Generation of Peleg	Tower of Babel
Abraham	Abraham	Abraham	Abraham	Abraham (+ Nimrod)	Abraham	Abraham
Isaac		Isaac	Isaac	Isaac	Isaac	Isaac
Jacob	Israel/Jacob	[—]	Jacob	Jacob (+ Esau)	Jacob	Jacob
				Twelve tribes	Twelve tribes	Twelve tribes
Levi	Levi	[—]	Levi (+ children of Merari, Gerson, and Kehat)	Levi		Leah, Levi

<i>AB</i>	<i>AKOM</i>	<i>ABK</i>	<i>AG</i>	<i>AK</i>	<i>Asaper</i>	<i>ABH</i>
	Amram	[—]		Amram		
		Moses	Moses	Moses	Moses	Moses
			Miriam		Miriam	Miriam
Aaron	Aaron	Aaron (lines 542–45)	Aaron	Aaron	Aaron	Aaron
			Phineas			
		Achan				
			“Impeccable families” (priests)	Priests		Priests
	“One of his clan”	High priest	High priest	High priest	High priest and priestly elders (“The mighty men of his tribe”)	

Note: *AB* = *Atah barata*; *ABH* = *Az be-da at ħakar* (Yose ben Yose); *ABK* = *Az be-en kol*; *AG* = *Azkir gevurot Elohab*; *AK* = *Atah konanta 'olam be-rov ħesed* (Yose ben Yose); *AKOM* = *Atah konanta 'olam me-rosh*; *Asaper* = *Asaper gedulot* (Yose ben Yose); [—] = missing in MSS.

You increased the abundance
 of your delicacies for rich pastures.
 They ate what was yours
 but did not know you.

They luxuriated
 on couches of licentiousness—
 and because of that, the divine beings
 were called those who fall⁵⁶ about. (lines 368–72)

The next stanza specifies the sin of idolatry:

They planned to proclaim
 the Faithful One a false god
 and called a carving⁵⁷
 by the name of the One who dwells in shelter.⁵⁸ (lines 373–74)

It is when Abraham and, by implication, the Jewish people arrive that we see most clearly that the authors of the *ʿAvodah* have selected historical details to highlight the ancestors of the priesthood. Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Levi, and Aaron are mentioned in all the *piyutim* listed in the table. Isaac is mentioned in all but one of those *piyutim*. More striking is the absence of Moses in the two earliest *piyutim*. In *Atah barata*, the poet's concern for selecting the priestly lineage is especially apparent from his description of the sons of Jacob:

You distinguished a treasure
 from among his children:
 This is Levi,
 the third from the womb.

You looked favorably
 on those who came forth from his loins:
 This is Aaron,
 the first holy man.

You specified to him with what⁵⁹
 he should enter the shrine

and informed him of what he should do
before you on the Day of Pardoning.

You clothed him in righteousness,
in garments white as snow,
and added four
more than his brothers'.⁶⁰

You sanctified him
like the sanctity of your seraphim,
for he appeased [you for]
the sins of your people.

You made him a chief
for the descendants of the father of a multitude⁶¹
and an officer
for the third seed.⁶²

The names of your tribes
you placed on his two shoulders
so that when he entered before you,
they could be remembered for good.

As a substitute for atonement,
you informed his sons
so that they serve before you,
following his example.⁶³

The succession presented here is from Jacob to Levi (the “third seed”) to Aaron, and then to Aaron’s sons. Israel’s heroes are traced from the patriarchs to the priest who would later preside in the Jerusalem Temple over the sacrifice that is the subject of the poem. In a very similar passage, *Atah konanta ‘olam me-rosh* arranges its history of Israel so that Abraham leads directly to Aaron:

You gave him
twelve tribes,
lovers of the Most High,
they were called from the womb.

You placed a fair garland
 of favor upon Levi
 and of all his brothers,
 you placed a crown on him.⁶⁴

Amram was chosen
 from the seed of Levi.
 Aaron, holy to the Lord,
 you sanctified from his stock.

You adorned him
 in woven garments,
 and by his sacrifices
 he annulled your anger.⁶⁵

In both cases, Aaron's brother Moses is notable for his absence. There are episodes in which Moses figures are mentioned in *Az be-en kol*, but judging from the extant fragments, they do not seem to be prominent. For example, one fragmentary stanza probably alludes to Numbers 17, in which Moses instructs Aaron to place his staff before the Ark of the Covenant to warn the children of Israel against rebellion:

Your staff [] peoples
 []
 to strike the rebels. (line 529)⁶⁶

Although Moses gives Aaron the instructions to do this, it is Aaron's staff that sprouts blossoms, thereby indicating his chosenness for officiating in the Tabernacle. Likewise, the poem mentions the Exodus and God's judgment against Egypt, but does not mention Moses:

He executed judgment
 in Zoan⁶⁷ and its idols
 and tore, like a garment
 that which is measured in his hollow⁶⁸
 into footpaths. (lines 532–35)

A clearer reference to Moses follows:

[] approached
 the one with whom he plays⁶⁹
 when he [] would speak
 and you would answer. (lines 536–37)

This is an apparent reference to Exod 19.19, in which Moses would speak on Mount Sinai and God answered him in thunder.

Like the earlier *piyutim*, the genealogy in Yose ben Yose's *Azkir gevurot* goes directly from Jacob to Esau to Amram. When Moses is mentioned, it is in a context that makes him an equal with his brother and sister:

Like a splendid vine
 of beautiful branches and fruit,
 he caused Amram to sprout forth
 from the root of Levi.

For it sent forth
 three precious offspring:
 a priest,⁷⁰ a shepherd,⁷¹
 and a woman prophetess.⁷² (lines 109–10)

Not only is Moses' leadership in the Exodus and reception of Torah mentioned (lines 111–14), but so is Miriam's miraculous role in supplying water to the Israelites in the wilderness:

The drumming maiden⁷³
 dug a well for the people.
 She perished and was gathered,⁷⁴
 and there was no water.⁷⁵ (line 115)

This account of Amram's three children culminates in Aaron, the "officiator" by whose virtue Israel (known here as "the beloved") merits the divine presence:

The beloved were favored
 with the accompaniment of the clouds of glory
 by virtue of the officiator,
 in peace and in ease.

A covenant of salt
 was engraved for him and his descendants
 so that the covenant of salt of the fragrant offering
 would never cease. (lines 116–17)

The poet then links Aaron to the continuity of the priesthood and makes clear that no other clan has access to its privileges, in part thanks to the zealotry of the “hero” Phineas:

For the zealous wrath of the hero
 God paid recompense
 and renewed his office
 for generations forever.

No foreigner shall ever acquire
 the inheritance of their glory;
 no other man shall inherit
 their given portion.

Indeed, in this passage, Yose mentions Moses only to emphasize that he taught the sacrificial procedure to the priests:

The lawgiver taught them
 the order of the *‘Avodah*
 because he was in charge of it
 when they were at the gate.⁷⁶

The *piyut* proceeds to the lengthy description of the sacrifice, carried out by “impeccable families” of priestly aristocrats (line 127).

The only allusion to Jewish kings in the *‘Avodah piyutim* under study is a negative one. In *Azkir gevurot* (line 120), King Uzziah is mentioned because of his arrogance in presuming to offer incense on the altar, for which he was condemned by the priests and punished by God.⁷⁷

The company of notables⁷⁸
 was taken down to the valley of the shadow;
 and they⁷⁹ settled the king of power⁸⁰
 in isolated quarters.

This stanza reinforces the message of this section of the *piyut*, which is the exclusivity of the Aaronide priesthood.

In general, Moses' role in history is downplayed in the '*Avodah piyutim*, and that of Aaron and his descendants is emphasized. This pattern stands in curious parallel to the rabbinic chain of tradition in mAvot, which omits the priesthood as a class. These passages also mark the beginning of one of the most important themes in the '*Avodah*: the valorization of the priesthood.⁸¹

The '*Avodah* and the Anaphora

It has been noted that patterns of succession were common both to the Hellenistic philosophical and early Christian traditions. These affinities also extend to liturgical poetry. In this volume, Ophir Münz-Manor draws striking parallels between the historiographic structure of the '*Avodah* and the anaphora of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, especially in their description of human prehistory and the history of Israel.⁸² He argues that his findings strengthen Liger's argument that the *Apostolic Constitutions* adapted the '*Avodah*. So, too, Derek Krueger has shown how the extensive use of the history of Israel in early anaphora, from the liturgy of Saint Basil to the *Apostolic Constitutions*, served ideological and social purposes. He argues that "the liturgical repetition of Old Testament narrative asserted its relevance to the formation of Christian community" in Western Syria, where there were significant populations of both Jews and Marcionites.⁸³

In light of these parallels, it may be useful to compare the results of this survey of priestly succession in the '*Avodah* with two very different arguments made for continuity of the priesthood in early Christian sources. A hymn by Ephraem provides a striking parallel to the rabbinic chain of tradition applied to the Christian priesthood. In his *Hymn against the Heretics*, he defends the orthodox succession of the priesthood in this way:

The Most High descended on Mount Sinai
 and stretched forth his hand over Moses.
 Moses laid it on Aaron,
 and so it continued till John.
 Therefore did our Lord say to him,
 "It is right that I be baptized by you,

That the Order may not perish.”
 Our Lord gave it to the Apostles,
 And behold, in our Church is its handing-on.
 Blessed be he who gave us his Order.
 (Ephraem, *Hymn against the Heretics* 22.19)⁸⁴

As Robert Murray points out, this interpretation of the anointing of Christ is unconventional, especially since it relates it to the Aaronic priesthood.⁸⁵ For our purposes, this passage is remarkable not simply for this reason but for its linking the priesthood with Sinai through Moses and its further association of priestly succession with the present-day Christian priesthood through a (brief) chain of tradition. It is difficult to tell whether Ephraem was somehow influenced by *Avot's* chain of tradition motif and whether it had any influence on subsequent Jewish discourse.

An interesting contrast in the West is offered by Leo I in sermon 3. Invoking the more common model of Melchizedek as spiritual ancestor, Leo contrasts the Jewish notion of a hereditary Aaronide priesthood with that of a Christian priesthood, transmitted not by parentage but by divine grace:

For it is he⁸⁶ of whom it is prophetically written, “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek,” that is, not after the order of Aaron, whose priesthood descending along his own line of offspring was a temporal ministry, and ceased with the law of the Old Testament, but after the order of Melchizedek, in whom was prefigured the eternal High Priest. And no reference is made to his parentage because in him it is understood that he was portrayed, whose generation cannot be declared. And finally, now that the mystery of this divine priesthood has descended to human agency, it runs not by the line of birth, nor is that which flesh and blood created, chosen, but without regard to the privilege of paternity and succession by inheritance, those men are received by the Church as its rulers whom the Holy Ghost prepares: so that in the people of God’s adoption, the whole body of which is priestly and royal, it is not the prerogative of earthly origin which obtains the unction, but the condescension of divine grace which creates the bishop. (Leo I, sermon 3; trans. NPNF)⁸⁷

In the rhetoric of each, the Jewish priesthood is transmitted through birth; the rabbinic scholastic succession through learning; and the Christian priesthood

through the Holy Spirit. While the rabbinic chains of tradition do not follow the same logic as Leo explicitly, they do present a mode of succession not based on paternity but on tradition. The *‘Avodah*, therefore, emphasizes a form of inherited authority that stands in contrast both to the rabbinic and one significant Christian parallel.

Conclusion

The poets of the *‘Avodah* had two related goals: to contribute to the drama of sin and atonement that is the Yom Kippur liturgy; and to evoke the sacrifice of purification that is the original ritual basis of the day. The poets therefore selected biblical figures that reinforced these goals. Their descriptions of the early ancestors of Israel emphasize the distance from God that sin brings on; in their selection of Israel's patriarchs, they draw a direct line from Abraham to Aaron. The *payetan* of the *‘Avodah* wished to forge an identification with the high priest and relate the synagogue ritual with that of the lost Temple.⁸⁸

What are the implications for social history of this tendency to favor the priesthood in *piyut*? Joseph Yahalom, Oded Irshai, and others have argued for the persistence of priestly circles in Galilee in Late Antiquity.⁸⁹ Several *payetanim* were reported to have been priests themselves; *payetanim* from Hadutahu to Pinḥas ha-Kohen and Eleazar be-Rabbi Killir wrote compositions commemorating the priestly courses known as *mishmarot*, which may have survived as organized clans in the Galilee.⁹⁰ The iconography of the ancient synagogue also attests to a special interest in the Temple and priesthood, especially the newly discovered synagogue at Sepphoris, which depicts the Temple rituals in almost their entirety,⁹¹ although the extent to which these factors are evidence of the presence of a priestly constituency in the ancient synagogue has been debated.⁹² In addition, sources dating from these centuries outside the central rabbinic canon indicate a heightened prestige for the priesthood. For example, Hekhalot literature emphasizes Rabbi Ishmael's priestly descent as an indicator of his holiness and suitability for reception of the secrets of ascent.⁹³ Whether or not the priesthood in Palestine in the fifth and sixth centuries constituted an organized sociopolitical force, it is likely that there were priests who held on to their identities as priests.⁹⁴ In this environment, any individuals or groups of priestly background not in the center of rabbinic networks may have found their symbolic value enhanced in the synagogue environment.

It has been argued recently that the priesthood came to greater prominence in the fifth and sixth centuries as a result of the dissolution of the patriarchate and the consolidation of Byzantine authority. If this argument is true, it is also possible that in constructing such a succession list, the *payetanim* were responding to early Christian claims regarding biblical precedents for the authority of the bishops. Indeed, explicit polemics against Christianity can be found in classical *piyut*; there are a few hints of subtle polemics in the work of Yose ben Yose and more explicit polemics in the works of the sixth-century *payetan* Yannai.⁹⁵ However, a few factors suggest that the *payetanim* were motivated no less by internal concerns than the debate with Christianity. One is that where such explicit polemics exist in early *piyut*, they focus not on Christian religious authority but on Christology itself or the political hegemony of Rome.⁹⁶

Moreover, the pattern described here is found not only in the later of the preclassical *piyutim*, such as those of Yose ben Yose, but in the earliest extant poetic 'Avodah compositions, *Atah barata* and *Atah konanta 'olam me-rosh*, indicating that the emphasis on priestly concerns in the 'Avodah was an original part of its structure from the third century on. These factors suggest that the poets were especially concerned with the more proximate rhetorical claims to leadership, as exemplified in *Avot* and its parallels. Chains of tradition in the 'Avodah *piyutim* add to the evidence that, along with rabbinic ideology, a form of cultic piety coexisted, in which the priesthood was valued, and perhaps even represented, in the ancient synagogue.

CHAPTER II

Change and Continuity in Late Legal Papyri from Palaestina Tertia: *Nomos Hellēnikos* and *Ethos Rōmaikon*

HANNAH M. COTTON

This short study relies almost exclusively on the documentary evidence contained in four documents, all written in Greek. Two of them—*P.Yadin* 18 and 65—were written in Arabia in 128 and 131 CE, respectively.¹ The other two—*P.Nessana* 18 and 20—were written in Palaestina Tertia in 537 and 558 CE, respectively.² Palaestina Tertia included at the time those parts of Arabia and Judaea that in the early second century belonged to two different Roman provinces. Indeed, all four were written under Roman rule in the area.

The early two documents record marriage settlements entered into by Jews, as the names, but not much more, attest. Nothing in the two Greek marriage contracts from Arabia reflects what came to be the normative Jewish marriage contract, commonly known as the *ketubah*—above all, they lack the formula that would place them solidly in a Jewish framework and under the sanction of Jewish law: “that you will be my wife according to the law of Moses and the Jews” (כדין משה ויהודאי די תהוה לי לאנתה). And it is not as though the formula could not be expressed in Greek. However, we do find this formula in the opening lines of three Aramaic marriage contracts from the Judean Desert: *Mur* 20 and 21 and *P.Yadin* 10.³ Thus, if the rabbinic marriage contract had by then developed its own special form, it seems not to have become normative.⁴ Therefore, I maintain that these two documents, *P.Yadin* 18

and *PHever* 65, albeit written by and for Jews, nevertheless can be legitimately used, not least for lack of other evidence, to trace continuity and change in legal practice and formulas in this part of the Roman world over the centuries.

Something similar was attempted in a recently published article on “Continuity of Nabataean Law in the Petra Papyri: A Methodological Exercise.”⁵ Starting from the observation that the law of succession reflected in second-century Jewish papyri written in Arabia and found in the archives from Nahal Hever is neither Jewish law nor Roman law, I concluded that this must have been Nabataean law.⁶ Furthermore, it would seem that the latter had survived into the sixth century and resurfaced in the recently discovered—and so far, only partially published—*P.Petra* of the sixth century.

I would like to examine one instance of the Greek legal tradition that had become the common law—a legal koine, if you wish—of the Roman Near East, just as the Greek language became its lingua franca, without ousting the Aramaic legal tradition or the use of Aramaic in its various dialects in daily life. Seemingly paradoxical, the advent of Rome brought with it a considerable intensification of the process of Hellenization in the Near East, as attested in the written corpus as well as in material culture, a claim made long ago, especially by Fergus Millar in “The Problem of Hellenistic Syria,” where he draws attention to the limits of Hellenization.⁷

Despite the fact that the majority of legal documents found in the Judaeen Desert are in Greek, the peculiar circumstances responsible for the preservation of the legal contracts from Judaea and Arabia—the flight of the Jews from their villages to the caves of the Judaeen Desert—would make it unsafe, and probably wrong, to say, even if the figures support it, that by the second century CE, the Aramaic legal contract had been altogether ousted by the Greek contract.⁸ On the contrary, the Aramaic legal contract remained alive and vibrant in the Roman Near East—at least in some form—for centuries to come, as must be inferred from the running commentaries in Hebrew on its formulas in the Mishnah and the Tosefta.⁹ It would resurface, for example, in the late contracts of the Cairo Genizah.

There are virtually no firmly dated legal documents from our area in any script or language between the last document from the Babatha archive (132 CE)¹⁰ and the sixth century: a gap of 380 years separates the latest legal document in the Babatha archive, *P.Yadin* 27 of 132 CE, from the first safely dated legal contract from Nessana, *P.Nessana* 16 of 512 CE; and over 400 years separate it from *P.Petra* I, of 537 CE.¹¹ But the fortuitous survival of two significant legal corpora of Greek in the village of Nessana and in the city of Petra allows

us to say with confidence what we cannot say about the Aramaic legal tradition: that Greek is likely to have continued as the language of legal documents down to the sixth and seventh centuries in what had been Roman Arabia and Judaea/Syria Palaestina and was now Palaestina Tertia.

Nomos Hellēnikos in Second-Century Documents from Arabia

P.Yadin 18 (128 CE) was published for the first time in 1987 by Naphtali Lewis, Ranon Katzoff, and Jonas Greenfield.¹² Katzoff's painstaking legal commentary and, above all, his *interpretatio Hebraica* (240) were taken to pieces, to put it mildly, by Abraham Wasserstein in an article published in 1989,¹³ which laid the groundwork and created the context for all future work on the legal documents from the Judean Desert; the latter, as he claims there "fit into the picture of a well-integrated multiethnic society, whose cultural, social and legal life has absorbed many and various elements from different sources."¹⁴ For Wasserstein, the idea of "a *koine* of private law"¹⁵ is encapsulated into the single phrase *Hellēnikos nomos* in *P.Yadin 18* (from the Babatha Archive) and, in the reverse order, *nomos Hellēnikos* in *P.Hever 65* (from the Salome Komaïse Archive). Both are marriage contracts between Jews in Arabia. However, the scenario at the background of the two documents is very different.

In *P.Yadin 18* (a double document with inner and outer texts),¹⁶ a father, Judah son of Eleazar Khthousion (Babatha's second husband), gives his daughter Shelamzion in marriage to Judah Cimber son of Ananias for her to be his wedded wife according to the laws (*kata tous nomous*). She brings a dowry of gold, silver, and clothing with the value of 200 silver denarii; the bridegroom, having acknowledged that he has received all this from her father and that he owes it to his wife after adding to it another 300 denarii, "takes upon himself the obligation to provide for his wife and for the children to come in accordance with the *Hellēnikos nomos*; his entire property, both present and future, is placed in lien to guarantee this undertaking."¹⁷

In *P.Hever 65*, a very damaged inner text of a double document, the scenario is totally different, if one accepts my interpretation and revised reading of Lewis's *editio princeps*.¹⁸ Yeshu' a son of Menaḥem, from [the village] of Sof-fathe . . . in the district of the city of Livias of the Peraea is already married to Salome Komaïse daughter of Levi in an unwritten marriage, *agraphos gamos*, as it is called, which was, as its name implies, a marriage without a contract, but whose legal validity was indistinguishable from that of the written marriage,

the *engraphos gamos*, and it was practiced among Jews, as well as among others, at that time.¹⁹ How do we know that? The groom, who addresses the bride as his wife, says so in so many words in lines 3–6: “Yeshu‘a son of Menaḥem . . . agreed with Salome also called Komaïse, daughter of Levi, his wife, who is from Maḥoza, that they continue life together as also before this time.”²⁰

The occasion for drawing up the contract is the belated receipt of a dowry consisting in feminine adornment in silver, gold, and clothing for the amount of ninety-six denarii, which the groom now acknowledges, and reciprocates by taking upon himself the obligation to support his wife and children to come, in accordance with the *nomos Hellēnikos* and the *Hellēnikos tropos*, while his entire property, both present and future, guarantees this undertaking—and all this in terms almost identical to those we have just seen in *P.Yadin* 18.²¹

The fact that *nomos Hellēnikos* (*P.Yadin* 18) and its variant *Hellēnikos nomos kai Hellēnikos tropos* (*P.Hever* 65) appear in two marriage contracts from the Judaean Desert in the same context—they are preceded by the acknowledgment by the groom of the receipt of a dowry and the undertaking to provide for the wife and children, and are followed by the liability clause, the entailment of his property to support the wife and children to come—is highly significant, given that the circumstances and the occasion, as was pointed out above, differ considerably. I believe that the sequence of acknowledgment and obligation, underlined by the formula “according to Hellenic law” (or its variant “according to Hellenic law and custom”) and guaranteed by the liability clause, constituted a fixed legal clause susceptible to slight variations, which the local scribe, following standard notarial practice, would insert into the marriage contract at precisely this point.²²

The first editor of the two papyri, the late Naphtali Lewis, dismissed the edifice raised by Wasserstein on and around the phrase *Hellēnikos nomos*, on the grounds that nowhere in the Roman Near East is the expression attested in any language, nor is there “a single occurrence of the expression *Hellēnikos nomos* in all the thousands of Greek papyri from Egypt.”²³ This argument does not carry much weight. Wasserstein is right to be less concerned with the precise meaning of the term than with the highly significant evidence “that the obligation to provide for the wife and the children to be born is taken upon himself by the [Jewish] husband in accordance with Greek *nomos*.”²⁴ This bears witness to the remarkable degree of assimilation visible here, without Hellenizing its users: “not necessarily an assimilation to Hellenism *tout court* but an assimilation to an environment that in spite of not being Hellenized uses Hellenic elements; and conversely, to an environment that in spite

of using Hellenic elements, is not by virtue of that use to be thought of as Hellenized.”²⁵

Hellēnikos nomos should be equated with “local custom”—with the rabbis’ כמנהג המדינה or with the Syrian-Roman law book’s כל אחרא איך נמוסא דילה. It recalls the so-called court stipulations (תנאי בית דין) of the Jewish *ketubah* (mKet 4.6–12): “tacit conditions, binding upon all, even if not written in a specific marriage contract.”²⁶ It certainly implies the existence of other options, but this is the default, to use today’s idiom.²⁷ It must be admitted that the expression is absent from two marriage contracts written in Greek from Judaea—*Mur* 115 (124 CE?) and 116 (second century CE)²⁸—and cannot be restored in a third one, *P.Hever* 69 (130 CE),²⁹ a canceled marriage contract from Judaea in which the mother gives her daughter in marriage to Akiba son of Meir from the village of Yakim in the territory of Zephene—despite the many similarities that the last one shares with the contracts from Arabia.³⁰

Ethos Rômaïkon in the Sixth-Century Papyri from Nessana

P.Nessana 18 and 20 belong to the sixth century,³¹ over 400 hundred years after the marriage contracts that we have just looked at were written. Unfortunately, there are no plates of the two papyri in the publication of the Nessana papyri, and the second one, in a bad state of preservation, was partly restored from the first one.³² The corpus of papyri from Nessana has been unaccountably neglected by scholars, perhaps because of the need for cooperation between classicists, Arabists, and historians of Late Antiquity and early Islam. Recently, though, they seem to have attracted more attention: an important article by David Wasserstein elicited a response by Robert G. Hoyland, which he modestly describes as a footnote to Wasserstein’s;³³ and in 2008, Rachel Stroumsa defended a doctoral dissertation on this fascinating and difficult corpus.³⁴

I cannot go into detail here about complicated questions of ethnicity, religion, and language. However, the language of legal documents—marriage contracts, to be precise—is still Greek. If any other language was used by the natives of Nessana, if it was other than Greek, it did not survive in a written form until well into the Islamic conquest. Nevertheless, Rachel Stroumsa’s assumption of an overall Semitic background lurking behind the Greek veneer or substance of the papyri is surely correct. Put differently: there is enough evidence in the papyri themselves, aside from the onomasticon, the place names, and the nicknames, for a widespread use of Arabic as the spoken language.

The written documentation, overwhelmingly in Greek, does not mean that the people who wrote the documents or had them written for them were necessarily Hellenized—and it does not mean that Greek was the commonly spoken language.

What we find in the marriage contract from Nessana is no longer *nomos Hellēnikos* but *ethos Rōmaikon* (also spelled *êthos Rōmaikon*), Roman custom.³⁵ I suggest that *ethos Rōmaikon* in the two marriage contracts from Nessana has the same connotation that the *nomos Hellēnikos* had in the papyri from Arabia. After hundreds of years of Roman rule, this was the prevailing custom; however, it was not pure Roman law, any more than the *nomos Hellēnikos* was pure Greek law, but was heavily diluted with local legal provisions. Lines 1–11 of *P.Nessana* 18 read as follows:³⁶

In the consulate following that of the most illustrious Flavius Belisarius, the year 432 to the provincial era, day [unknown] in the month of Daisios [May-June], the fifteenth year of the indiction, in the village of Nessana, in the territory of the city of Elousa. In the name of everything good. [. . .] Flavius Alobaios son of Elias, a soldier [acknowledges that he has given?] Aniya, his younger daughter, she being subject to his legal power, [for the partnership of marriage] to Flavius Valens son of Alobaios Algeb, both [Flavius] Alobaios and [Flavius] Valens being natives of the aforementioned village of Nessana, and received from [the groom] six ounces of gold and in feminine adornment (i.e. jewelry or clothes) six solidi . . . which he has sent to Aniya as bridal gifts [and premarital gifts—*donatio ante nuptias*].

The next paragraph repeats the contents of the dowry from the groom's point of view, followed by: "The aforesaid Al-Ghubb son of Al-Ubayy covenants with Āniyah that he the bridegroom, is indebted to her and to her heirs and assigns for the dowry of six ounces of gold and the aforesaid six solidi, a debt that he will repay according to Roman custom, without any dispute of legal action" (line 20: *ethei Rōmaikō kai chōreis pa[sēs antilogias kai zêtēsēs?]*). This is followed by an extremely lacunose passage that seems to be a version of what, in the earlier documents, was the liability, or entailment clause. The same phrase "according to Roman custom, without any dispute of legal action" reappears in the very damaged marriage contract attested in *P.Nessana* 20, which, despite its parallels with no. 18, the editor did not even attempt to

restore. However, there is no doubt that the order of the clauses closely followed the one in *P.Nessana* 18, and the restoration in *P.Nessana* 20, lines 20–21 of [*chôris pasês zêtêseôs kai antilogias êthei Rômai[kô]*], seems safe enough.

To my mind the use of *ethos Rômaikon* in Nessana vindicates the accuracy of Wasserstein's reading of *nomos Hellênikos*—and this is not trivial, for it shows that, in the second century, as later in the sixth century, there existed a society in the Roman Near East which considered itself bound by the law of the land. They could call it Greek law or Roman law, however diluted and contaminated it was, and Jews and others used it in their legal contracts.

Appendix 1

P.Yadin 18

Outer text, lines 29–67

29. ἐ[πὶ ὑ]πάτων Που[π]λεῖ[ο]ν Μετελῖ[ου] Νέπωνος τὸ β̄ και
Μάρκου
30. Ἀγγίου Λίβωνος [νώναις Ἀπριλίαις], ἀ[ρ]ιθμῶ δὲ τῆς νέας
31. ἐπαρχείας Ἀραβίας [ἔτους τρίτου εἰκοστοῦ] μη[νὸς] Ξαν-
32. δικοῦ π[ε]ντεκαίδεκ[ά]τῃ ἐν Μα[ωζα] περὶ Ζ[οα]ραν], ἐξ[έδ]ο-
33. τ[ο] Ἰούδα]ς Ἐλεαζάρου τοῦ καὶ [Χθουσί]ων[ος Σ]ελαμψι-
34. ώην τὴν ἰδίαν θυγατέραν αὐτοῦ παρθένον Ἰού-
35. δατι ἐπικαλουμένῳ Κίμβερι υἱῷ Ἀνανίου τοῦ Σωμα-
36. λα, ἀμφοτέροι ἀπὸ κώμης Αἰνγαδῶν τῆς Ἰουδαία[ς]
37. ἐνθάδε καταμένοντ[ες], εἶναι τὴν Σελαμψιών[ην]
38. Ἰούδατι Κίμβερι γυναῖκαν γαμετὴν πρὸς γάμου κ[οι]-
39. νωνίαν κατὰ τοὺς νόμους, προσφερομένην αὐτ[ῷ]
40. εἰς λόγον προσφορᾶς κοσμίαν γυναικίαν ἐν ἀργύρῳ κα[ὶ]
41. χρυσῷ καὶ ἱματισμῷ διατετει<μη>μένην ἐν ἀλλήλοις, ὥς
42. λέγουσιν οἱ ἀμφοτέροι, ἀξιοχρέαν εἶναι ἀργυρίου δη[ναρίων]
43. διακοσίων, ἣν τειμογ[ρ]αφίαν ὠμολόγησεν ὁ γήμ[ας] Ἰού-
44. δας ὁ καλούμενος Κίμβερ ἀπειληφέναι παρ' αὐτῆ[ς] διὰ χ[ει]-
45. ρὸς παραχρῆμα παρὰ Ἰούδου πατρὸς αὐτῆς καὶ ὀφείλ[ειν]
46. αὐτὸν τῇ αὐτῇ Σελαμψιώνῃ γυναικὶ αὐτοῦ ἅμα δη[να]-
47. ρίων ἄλλων τριακοσίων ἃ ὠμολόγησεν δοῦναι αὐ[τῇ]
48. πρὸς τὰ {τα} τῆς προγεγραμμένης προσφορᾶς [α]ὐτ[ῆς]
49. πάντα εἰς λόγον προι{ο}κὸς αὐτῆς ἀ[κολούθως] αἰρέσει τρο-

50. φῆς καὶ ἀμφιασμοῦ αὐτῆς τε καὶ τῶν μελλόν[των τέ-
 51. κνων ἐλληνικῶ νόμῳ ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰού[δα Κίμ-
 52. βeros πίστεως καὶ κινδύνου καὶ πάντων ὑπαρ[χόν-
 53. των ὧν τε ἔχει ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐνθ[ά-
 54. δε καὶ ὧν ἂν ἐπικτήσῃται πάντῃ πάντων κυρίως, [τρό-
 55. πῳ ᾧ ἂν αἰρήται ἢ Σελαμψιώνῃ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ ἢ ὅς δ[ι] αὐτῆς
 56. ἢ ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς πράσσω ἀιρήται τὴν εἰσπραξίν ποιείσθαι.
 57. ἀλλάξει δὲ Ἰούδας ὁ καλούμενος Κίμβερ [τῇ γυ]ναι[κί αὐτοῦ
 58. Σελαμψιώνῃ τὴν συγγραφὴν ταύτην ἐν ἀργ[ύρῳ ἢ σ-
 59. φαλισμένῳ ὡς καθήκει ὁπόταν αὐτὸν ἀπαιτήσ[ει
 60. ταῖς ἐαυτοῦ δαπάναις κατὰ μηδὲν ἀντιλέγων. εἰ δ[ὲ
 61. μὴ γε, ἐκτίσει αὐτῇ τὰ προγεγραμμένα δηνάρια [πάν-
 62. τα διπλοῦν, καὶ τῆς πράξεως γεινομένης αὐτ[ῇ ἀπό
 63. τε Ἰούδ[ο]υ Κίμβερους ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὑπ[αρχόν-
 64. των αὐτοῦ κυρίως, τρόπῳ ᾧ ἂν αἰρήτα[ι Σε]λαμψ[ιώνῃ ἢ ὅς
 65. δι] αὐτῆς ἢ ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς πράσσω τὴν εἰσπρ[αξίν ποι-
 66. εἶσθαι. π[ιστ]ε[ι] [ἐπη]ρωτήθη καὶ ἀνθωμολογήθ[η] ταῦ-
 67. τα οὕτως καλῶς γείνεσθαι.

Appendix 2

P.Hever 65 (olim P.Yadin 37)

Inner text

- 1 ἐπὶ ὑπάτ[ων] Σεργίου Ὀκταουίου Λαίνα Ποντι[ανοῦ καὶ
 Μάρκου Ἀντωνίου
 ῥουφείνου πρὸ ἐπτὰ εἰδ[ῶν] Αὐγούστων, κατὰ δὲ]
 2 τὸν τῆς [νέ]ας ἐπαρχείας Ἀραβίας ἀριθμὸν ἔτο[υς] ἕκτου καὶ
 εἰκοστοῦ μην]ός
 Λό[ο]υ ἐγγεακαιδεκά[τῃ ἐν Μαῶζα τῆς Ζο-]
 3 ἀρηγῆς . [. . .] Πέτραν μητρόπολιν τῆς Ἀραβίας, *c.4*
letters ὡμολογήσ]ατο
 Ἰησους Μαννημου τ[ῶν ἀπὸ κόμης *c.8 letters*]
 4 Σοφραθε[. . .] περὶ πόλιν Λιουιάδος τῆς Π[εραίας] *c.9 let-*
ters πρὸς(?) Σαλ]ωμην
 καλομένην Κ[ομαῖσιν] Ληουείου τήν]

- 5 γυναῖκα, Μ[α]ωζηνήν ὥστε αὐτοὺς {ᾧστε α[ὐτοὺς} *c.17 letters*.ετ συμβιωσ . . . [*c.14 letters*]
- 6 αὐτῇ[ς κ]αὶ πρὸ τούτου τοῦ χρόνου ..[καὶ ὀφείλιν? *c.10 letters*] τῇ αὐτῇ Κομαῖς[η
τῇ]ν προῖ{ο}κα
ὁ αὐ]τὸς Ἰησοῦς
- 7 αὐτῆς ἀ[ρ]γυρίου δηνάρια ἐνανήκοντα ἕξ, [ἃ ὠμολογήσατο ὁ
γῆμας
[ἀπ]εσχηκ[έν]αι παρ' αὐτῆς τῇ [οὔ]σῃ ἡμέρᾳ
- 8 τειμογ[ρ]αφίαν κοσμίας γυναικίας ἐν ἀ[ργύρῳ καὶ χρυσῷ καὶ
ίμα]τισμῷ καὶ
ἐταίροις γυ[ναι]κίοις ἄξι-
- 9 [οχρέαν] τοῦ ἀργυρίου, σὺν αἰρέσει τροφῆς [καὶ
ἀμφιασμοῦ αὐτῆς] τε καὶ
τῶν μελλόντων[ν τέκ]νων νόμ[ω]
- 10 [ἐλληνικ]ῶ καὶ ἐλλ[η]νικῶ τρόπῳ ἐπὶ τῆς τ[οῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ
πίστεω]ς καὶ
κινδύνου πᾶν[των ὑπα]ρχόντων
αὐτοῦ
- 11 αὐτοῦ ὧν τε ἔχει ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ πατρίδι Σοφφ[αθε . . . *c.7 letters*
καὶ ὧν ἂν]
ἐπικτήσεται . . . [*c.10 letters*]
- 12 σ[*c.6 letters* ἀπὸ] τοῦ αὐτοῦ[ῦ Ἰ]ησοῦ καὶ ἐκ τ[ῶν] ὑπαρχόντων
αὐτοῦ πάντ]η
[. . .][. . . .]ς τρόπῳ ᾧ
- 13 ἂν αἰρήται ἡ αὐτὴ Κομαῖ[ση] ἢ ὅς [δι' αὐ]τῆς ἢ [ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς
πράσσω]ν τὴν
εἰσπραξίν ποιῆσθαι, περὶ τοῦ]
- 14 οὔτως [κ]αλῶς γείνεσθαι πίστεως ἐπηρω[τημένης καὶ
ἀνθωμολογημένης·
συμπαρόντος *c.8 letters*]
- 15 Μα[ναημο]ν ἐπιτρόπου τῇ[ς αὐ]τῆς Κομαῖσης. Ἐπ[ιγραφῆ? *letters?*]
- 7 ἐνανήκοντα 8 τιμογραφίαν ἐτέροις

In the consul[ship] of Sergius Octavius Laenas Pontia[nus and Marcus Anton]ius Rufinus, the seve[nth] of August, and according to the computation

of the ne[w] province of Arabia year [twenty-six] on the nineteenth of month Loos, [in Maḥoza in the district of Z]o'ar [of the administrative region of] Petra, metropolis of Arabia, Yeshu'a son of Menaḥem, from [the village] of Soffathe . . . in the district of the city of Livias of the administrative region of P[eraea . . . agreed with Sal]ome also called K[omaïse, daughter of Levi], his wife, who is from Maḥoza, [that they continue] life together . . . as also before this time . . . , [and that he owes?] the above-mentioned Komaïse, as her dowry, ninety-six denarii of silver, [which the bridegroom], the above-mentioned Yeshu'a, [acknowledged] to have received from her on the present day, as the written evaluation of feminine adornment in sil[ver and gold and clo]thing and other feminine articles equivalent to the above-mentioned amount of money, (combined) with his undertaking to feed [and clothe both her] and her children to come in accordance with Greek custom and Greek manner upon [the above-mentioned Yeshu'a's good faith] and on peril of all his [posses]sions, both those which he possesses in his home village of Soffathe . . . [and those which he has here(?) as well as those which he may in addition] acquire. [She has the right of execution both upon] the above-mentioned Yeshu'a and [upon all(?)] his [validly] held possessions [everywhere], in whatever manner the abovementioned Komaïse, or whoever [acts] through her or [for her, may choose to carry out the execution,] regarding this being thus rightly done, the formal question having in good faith been as[ked and acknowledged, in reply. X] son of Menaḥem, guardian of the above-mentioned Komaïse was present with her.

Appendix 3

Excavations at Nessana

18

Marriage Settlement

ὁ[πατ]ρία τῇ μετὰ τὴν ὑπατία<v> Φλ(αοῦ) Βελι[σαρίου τοῦ
ἐνδοξοτ(άτου) ἔτους
τετρακοσιοστοῦ
τριακοστοῦ δευτέρου μηνὸς {ο} Δαι[σίου] χρόνων
ἰνδικτίωνος ιε ἐν κώμῃ Νεσσάνοις
ὀρίο]ν πόλεως Ἐλούσης· ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἀγ[ραθοῖς] ὁμολογοῦσιν
ἀλλήλοις +/- II

- νιων Φλ(άουιος) ΑλοβαιοϚ Ἡλίου σ[τρ]α[τιώτης τοῦ ἐνθάδε
κάστρου δεδωκέναι?
- 5 Ανιαν ὑπεξουσίαν αὐτοῦ θυγατήρα ν[εωτέραν πρὸς γάμου
κοινωνίαν? Φλαουία
Οὐάλευτι τοῦ Αλοβαιου, Αλγεβ Αλ[οβαίου δὲ καὶ Οὐάλης
+/- 10 καὶ αὐ-
τῶν ὀρμωμένων ἐκ τῆς προει[ρημένης κώμης Νεσσάνων
δεδωκέναι? χρυσοῦ
οὐγκίας ἕξ καὶ ἐν κοσμίοις νο[μίσματα ἕξ +/- 26
αἱ πρὸ γάμου ἀποσταλῖσαι τῇ [Ανια δωρεαί +/- 25 ἕξ
ὑποστάσεως?
- 10 Σεργίου εἰς λόγον ἔδνων καὶ προμ[+/- 36
χρυσαίοις νομίσματα ἕξ, εἰσὶν [νο(μίσματα) Ϛ +/- 12 ἀνθ' ὧν
ἐστὶν ἡ προῖξ? τῆς
γαμεθείσης Ανιας ἕξ ὑποστάσεω[ς τοῦ εἰρημένου Αλοβαιου
Ἡλίου
τῆς προικὸς πάσης χρυσοῦ οὐγκίας ἕξ +/- 28
σταθμῷ καὶ δοκιμασίᾳ παρ' Αλο[βαιου Ἡλίου? +/- 30
- 15 παρὰ τε τῆς γαμεθείσης Ανιας κ[αι? +/- 39
ἐκ πλήρους διὰ χει[ρ]ὸς· ὁμολογ[ε]ῖ [δὲ τῇ Ανια ὁ εἰρημένος
Αλγεβ Αλοβαιου? τὸν
γαμετὴν ὀφίλειν τε αὐτῇ καὶ κλ[ηρονόμοις αὐτῆς καὶ
διαδόχοις? +/- 8
τὰς προγεγραμμένας τῆς προικ[ὸς χρυσοῦ οὐγκίας ἕξ καὶ τὰ
προγεγραμμένα?
νομίσματα ἕξ ὄφλημα προικιμ[αῖον ὃ καὶ
παραδώσει? +/- 19
- 20 τιας ἔθει Ῥωμαϊκῷ καὶ χωρεῖς π[ά]σης ἀντιλογίας καὶ
ζητήσεως? +/- 12
καὶ ἔστε κύρια βέβαια τ[ᾶ] γράμματα ταῦτα αὐτῇ τε Ανια καὶ
κληρονόμοις
αὐτῆς καὶ διαδόχοις κ[αι αὐτῷ Οὐάλεντι τῷ Αλοβαιου καὶ
πάντων
αὐτοῦ κληρονόμων καὶ διαδόχω[ν ὑποθεμένων· εἰς τοῦτο τὰ
ὑπάρχοντα αὐτοῖς πάντα ἐν
παντὶ
εἶδι καὶ γένει ετιπ . ρσενετι[+/- 37
- 25 ἔξουσίαν ἐκ παρ<α>φερνιμαί[ων +/- 40

- Ανι]ας αὐτῆς καὶ τὴν ὑπ' αὐ[τῆς
 ·χρυσωχρόων τ[
 καβαλλαρικὸν [
 ταβλωρον[
 30 . [. .] σὺν ε. [
 δέκα πλουμάκ[ια
 ἢ γαμεθεῖσα Ανια καὶ [
 φρια τρία ἔτι π[
 .λεμη [
 35 .ανιατιχαρην λευκὸν .[
 δ]έ[κα] πλουμάκην τρία [
 δυ]ο ἔτι Βαφωρι[
 .] . διακιν λιτὸν ν[
 οὔ]σης τε καὶ ἐσσομένης +/- 25 εἰ δὲ συμβαίη?
 40 τελευτᾶν ἢ γαμεθεῖσ[α Ανια +/- 38
 καὶ ἔχει κατὰ τὴν θίαν [διάταξιν +/- 34
 πα[. . . κ]αὶ τῶν ὑ[παρχόντων αὐτῇ? +/- 35
 αὐτοῦ καὶ κληρονόμο[ις αὐτοῦ +/- 30 ἐν παντὶ
 εἶδι καὶ γένει ἀπαιτήσ[εως γενομένης? +/- 29
 45 . .]ε[. . .] της .[
 χρυσαίοις νομίσμ[ασι
] . π . . . [
 .]. . . εἰν ἢ γαμεθ[εῖ]σα [Ανια
 σεν ἢ γαμεθεῖσα Ανια [
 50 Σέργιον ὁμολογη[

I reproduced the text as it appears in the first edition. However, in view of Ranon Katzoff and Naphtali Lewis's excellent emendations in "Understanding *P.Ness.* 18," making lines 6–7 read: Οὐάλεντι τοῦ Ἀλοβαῖος Ἀλγεβ, Ἀλ[οβαίου δὲ καὶ Οὐάλεντος ἀμφοτέρων καὶ αὐ]τῶν ὁρμωμένων ἐκ τῆς προει[ρημένης κώμης Νεσσάνων, . . . κτλ.], getting rid of the idea of minority and the resulting need for a curator, and pointing out that ὑπεξουσίαν in line 5 means *in potestate*, I offer below a new and precise translation of lines 1–11. For the rest, I leave the paraphrase of the first editor.

Lines I–II

In the consulate following that of the most illustrious Flavius Belisarius, the year 432 to the provincial era, day [unknown] in the month of Daisios [May–June], the fifteenth year of the indiction, in the village of Nessana, in the territory of the city of Elousa. In the name of everything good. . . . Flavius Al-Ubayy son of Elias, a soldier [acknowledges that he has given?] Aniya, his younger daughter, she being subject to his legal power, [for the partnership of marriage] to Flavius Valens son of Al-Ubayy Algeb, both [Flavius] Al-Ubayy and [Flavius] Valens being natives of the aforementioned village of Nessana, and [that he received from the groom] six ounces of gold, and in feminine adornment [jewelry or clothes] six solidi . . . which he has sent to Aniya as bridal gifts [and premarital gifts—*donatio ante nuptias*].

The counterpart of the above is the dowry of the wedded ‘Āniyah, coming from the property of the aforesaid al-Ubayy son of Elias. This dowry consists in full of six ounces of gold and six gold solidi guaranteed pure and of proper weight by al-Ubayy son of Elias and his wedded daughter ‘Āniyah and paid in full and in cash.

The aforesaid al-Ghubb son of al-Ubayy covenants with ‘Āniyah that he, the bridegroom, is indebted to her and to her heirs and assigns for the aforesaid dowry of six ounces of gold and the aforesaid six solidi, a debt which he will repay according to Roman practice, without any dispute or legal action.

This contract will be valid and binding both upon ‘Āniyah and her heirs and assigns and upon Valens son of al-Ubayy and all of his heirs and assigns and in support thereof they pledge their belongings of every sort and kind.

The bride ‘Āniyah’s dowry consists of the following: gold-colored objects, ten pillows, and so on.

In the event of the death of the bride ‘Āniyah, her property shall pass according to the imperial decree, etc.

The Representation of the Temple and Jerusalem in Jewish and Christian Houses of Prayer in the Holy Land in Late Antiquity

RINA TALGAM

In Late Antiquity, the Tabernacle and the Jerusalem Temple served as archetypes for both the synagogue and the church, and through the liturgies of the two institutions, new interpretations were given to the ceremonies that had taken place there. Considering the points of commonality and contrast in this parallel development, this essay will discuss the symbolic significance of the decorative schemes of synagogues and churches in the Holy Land. It attempts to define Jewish and Christian representations of the Tabernacle, Temple, and sacrificial offerings in relation to different concepts of earthly and heavenly temples, as well as the historical and eschatological Jerusalem. The two differed in significant ways but developed in mutual awareness and polemical interaction.

The Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple as Archetypes of Synagogue and Church Buildings

After the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, elements relating to the sacrificial offerings in the Temple were added to the synagogue liturgy, and

prayer came to be perceived as *‘avodah*.¹ According to a much-quoted passage from the Babylonian Talmud, R. Joshua b. Levi declared that the prayers were instituted to replace the daily sacrifices (bBer 26b). An analogy between synagogue and Tabernacle also emerges from a tradition in the Jerusalem Talmud (yBer 5.1, 9a; and tMeg 3.22).² As Elchanan Reiner has shown, the imitation of the Temple in the synagogue was not only a strategy of memory but primarily an effort to renew religious life in a world without a Temple.³

Late antique Jews, however, do not seem to have relinquished the yearning for the rebuilding of the Temple and the renewal of divine worship in it. Such a yearning finds expression, inter alia, in the listing of the twenty-four priestly courses in inscriptions in a number of synagogues, in *piyutim*, and in public prayers for the Ninth of Av.⁴ Jewish views of the synagogue as the heir to both Tabernacle and Temple are also reflected in its decoration.

This is apparent in the mid-third century, as one can see in the first stage of the wall decorations in the synagogue at Dura Europos. A four-column facade is depicted above the Torah shrine on the western wall, which faces Jerusalem. In the central opening of the facade is a double-door ark or a sanctuary (Figure 12.1).⁵ The sacred facade is flanked on one side by a seven-branched candelabrum, *lulav*, and *etrog* and on the other side by an illustration of the binding of Isaac (Genesis 22). This emblematic depiction of the sacred utensils symbolizes the continuity of Jewish liturgy from biblical times to the present, and the binding of Isaac indicates God’s covenant with Israel. When the Dura synagogue was repainted a few years later, the central design was kept, and three other scenes that elaborate on the same themes were added: one portrays the consecration of the Tabernacle (Figure 12.2); another shows the Ark of the Covenant on its way from Beth-Dagon to Beth-Shemesh and then to Jerusalem; and the third depicts the walls of Jerusalem and Solomon’s Temple (Figure 12.3).⁶

The mosaic floor in the Stratum IIa synagogue of Severus at Hammat Tiberias (from the second half of the fourth century)⁷ also provides evidence for perceptions of the continuity of Jewish liturgical life from the Tabernacle to the Temple, and from the Temple to the synagogue, which was considered a “lesser sanctuary,”⁸ as well as for the desire to rebuild the Jerusalem Temple in the days to come. The southern panel (Figure 12.4), which is nearest the Holy Ark, depicts a “sacred architectural facade” flanked by a seven-branched candelabra (*menorot*), an incense shovel, a shofar, and the four species. If the creators of the mosaic had sought a specific identification, the illustrated objects would have been accompanied by inscriptions, as was common practice



Figure 12.1. The decoration above the Torah shrine at Dura Europos. After Carl H. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura Europos, Final Report*, vol. 8: *The Synagogue* (New Haven, Conn., 1956).



Figure 12.2. The consecration of the Tabernacle at Dura Europos. After Carl H. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura Europos, Final Report*, vol. 8: *The Synagogue* (New Haven, Conn., 1956).

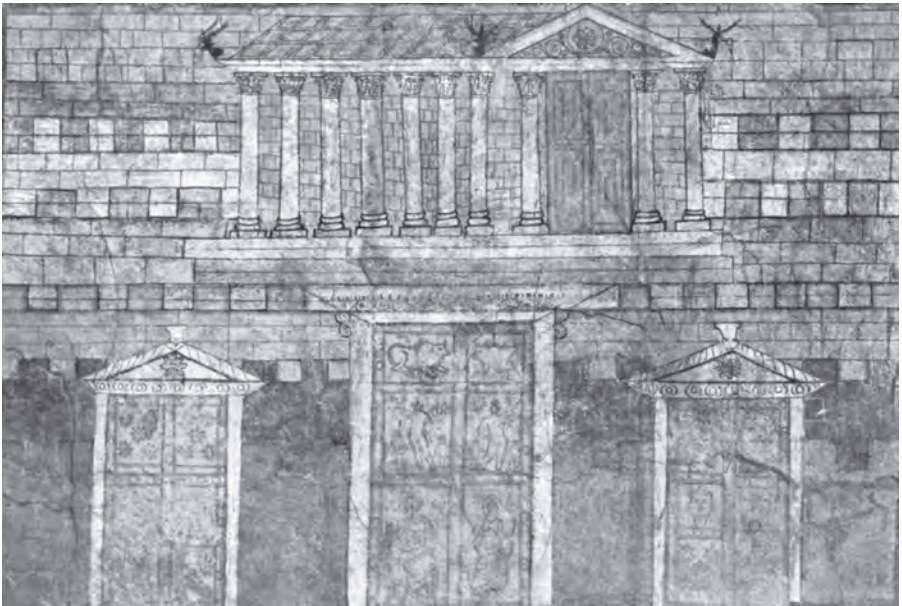


Figure 12.3. The walls of Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple at Dura Europos. After Carl H. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura Europos, Final Report*, vol. 8: *The Synagogue* (New Haven, Conn., 1956).

among synagogue artists when they wished to provide an exact identification. The sacred utensils in the panel nearest the Holy Ark in Hammat Tiberias feature the fundamental elements typical to such panels in the fifth and sixth centuries. The visual representation of a cult by the display of its characteristic sacred objects has many antecedents in Roman polytheistic art. For a religion in which God is invisible, the adoption of this formula was a reasonable solution.

The depiction of sacred liturgical objects appears on the floor of the nave, in a place meant to be walked on by the congregation. This is consistent with a broader tendency in Judaism in which the visual representation of a sacred object is not regarded as holy in itself. Even in the fifth and sixth centuries, when the chancel screen was used in the synagogue, the depictions of the sacred symbols remained outside the area bound by it. Such choices signal the status of the visual representation as nothing but a shadow of the original. Likewise, the synagogue was not a Temple but only represented one.⁹

The concerns attested in the material remains of late antique synagogues find some literary parallel in the *Baraita de-melekheth ha-mishkan*, a systematic



Figure 12.4. The panel depicting the holy utensils in the synagogue of Severus at Hammat Tiberias. Courtesy of the Center for Jewish Art, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

rabbinic exegetical work on the Tabernacle that should probably be dated to the third or fourth century. Robert Kirschner indicates that the harmony and continuity between the Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple were a major preoccupation of this work.¹⁰ Moreover, as with the panel of the holy utensils in the mosaic floor, it may reflect not only historical or exegetical interest in the topic but also the hopes for the restoration of the Temple.¹¹

These developments are best understood against the background of Christian claims. While the synagogue did not compete with the Temple in sanctity and did not eliminate the Jewish yearning for its reconstruction, the Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple were widely perceived by Christians as the archetype of church buildings, but the latter were superior to them: since Jesus sacrificed himself, the offering of sacrifices practiced in the Temple had been replaced by a better way of worshiping God. Redemption was believed to be by virtue of faith alone, and the Eucharist replaced the carnal sacrificial offerings. A number of early and late antique Christian writings, moreover, declare the destruction of the Temple as evidence of the failure of Judaism and the annulment of the first covenant in favor of a better one.¹² That this approach is based on the Gospels of Matthew (24.1–2) and Luke (19.32–34) suggests that it is early and may predate the parallels in Jewish synagogal art discussed above. I suggest that the identification of the church with the Tabernacle and the Temple—and the Christian conception of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem as evidence of the failure of Judaism and proof of the annulment of the laws of the Torah—may have necessitated the appearance of these symbols in the synagogue as well.

In any case, the appropriation of the Tabernacle-Temple symbolism by Christians occurred simultaneously. That some Christians were well acquainted with the parallel that Jews sought to create between synagogue and Temple, moreover, is suggested by John Chrysostom's diatribe against those of his own community who frequented synagogues and regarded them as holy places. Inter alia, he sought to point out their error in drawing a parallel between the Holy Ark and the Ark of the Covenant: "What sort of ark is it that the Jews now have, where we find no propitiatory, no tablets of the law, no Holy of Holies, no veil, no high priests, no incense, no holocaust, no sacrifice, none of the things that made the ark of old holy and august?" (John Chrysostom, *Adversus Iudaeos* 6.7, PG 48.913).¹³

The panegyric of Eusebius of Caesarea (265–340 CE) in the church at Tyre (ca. 317) reveals that as early as the fourth century, the Christian basilica was

regarded symbolically as a cosmic house and as the successor both to the Tabernacle and to Solomon's Temple (Eusebius, *HE* 10.4.1–72). Addressing Paulinus, the bishop of Tyre, he says: "Shall I call you a new Bezalel, the master builder of a divine tabernacle, or a Solomon, king of a new and far nobler Jerusalem, or a new Zerubbabel, who adorned the temple of God with the glory that was far greater the old?" (10.4.2–3; trans. G. A. Williamson). For him, the church's altar was the Holy of Holies, reserved for Jesus himself (10.4.63–67). The church was the living temple and the eternal proof of Christianity's victory. The physical church becomes an allegory for the spiritual one, namely, the congregation (10.4.70).

The parallel between the church and Solomon's Temple also emerges from the liturgy of the festive consecration (encaenia) of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem as described by Egeria, who stayed in the city from 381 to 384.¹⁴ Here, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre takes the place of Solomon's Temple religiously and with regard to Christian legitimacy to rule Jerusalem. Egeria compares the encaenia to the consecration of Solomon's Temple, and the church of the Holy Sepulchre is described as replacing Solomon's Temple and perhaps the Temple itself.¹⁵

One finds similar concerns in other fourth-century Christian sources. In the *Apostolic Constitutions* (2.57.10), from around 375, the church is likened to the Tabernacle. Similarly, a homily attributed to John, bishop of Jerusalem from 387 to 417, discusses the symbolism of the church and presents the multilayered significance of the church as simultaneously an embodiment of the Tabernacle and the Temple, paradise, Noah's ark, and the cosmos. Michel van Esbroeck has calculated that it was delivered on September 15 (10 Tishri) 394, on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement).¹⁶ While the Temple in Jerusalem was standing, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year on Yom Kippur and made atonement for all Jews. After Jesus offered himself, redemption is by faith alone.

Eusebius's panegyric at Tyre and John's homily show that the rhetoric and public preaching of bishops was guiding Christians toward the understanding that a single form may simultaneously manifest multiple meanings.¹⁷ This was occurring, moreover, at the same time in which the multilayered and ambivalent sacred utensils panel in the mosaic in the synagogue of Severus at Hammat Tiberias was being created. Significantly, such concerns do not immediately find expression in the art of the church. The views of church as new Tabernacle and Temple that found expression in Christian rhetoric, in architectural theories concerning the church as well as its furniture and liturgy, are

surprisingly absent from the Christian art and architecture of the Holy Land in the fourth and fifth centuries.

The analogy between specific churches and the Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple continues to appear in hymns and *ekphraseis* dated to the sixth century. The *Syrian Hymn for the Cathedral of Edessa*, for instance, proclaims that the Tabernacle served as the model for it: "Bezalel it was who, instructed by Moses, erected the Tabernacle to serve us as a model. And now Amidonius, Asaph, and Addai have built for Thee at Edessa this glorious Temple" (*Syrian Hymn for the Cathedral of Edessa* 2).¹⁸ Choricius ends his speech, which was probably delivered at the time of the dedication of the Church of Saint Stephen in Gaza, by comparing the church building to the Jewish Temple: "Let our church be tried as in a court against the famous temples of the world. . . . When all the judges have come together, each one being assigned to decide on the aspect he happens to know better than the others, our church will unanimously be declared to be victor" (*Laudatio Marci* 2.52–54).¹⁹ Similarly, a *kontakion* composed for the rededication of the church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople in 562, following the collapse of its dome, compared the Justinianic building project to that of Solomon.²⁰ The boasting of church patrons that they had triumphed over Solomon is repeated in the dedicatory inscription discovered in the basilica built by Anicia Juliana in Constantinople.²¹

Such rhetoric begins to be reflected in Christian art in the second half of the sixth century. Depictions that relate to the Temple and its sacrificial ceremonies start to appear in floor mosaics of churches in the diocese of Madaba. In the Chapel of Theotokos in the Basilica of Moses on Mount Nebo, in the center of an illustration of Ps 51.21 relating to the sacrificial ceremony in the Jerusalem Temple, between the two bulls, is a sketch representing a combination of the plan of the Temple and the depiction of a church building (Figure 12.5). The portrayal of a church is suggested by the apse and a central structure that may be perceived as a ciborium above the church altar. The Temple is designated first by inscription and then by the fire burning on the altar.

The ambivalence that allows for an alternative "reading" of the scheme appears to be intentional²²—a similar phenomenon, as we have seen, to the depiction of the holy utensils in the mosaics of contemporary synagogues. The proximity of the Temple's altar in the mosaic to the real church altar of the Chapel of Theotokos further strengthens the analogy between church and Temple. Herbert Kessler succinctly defines this phenomenon: "Art's advantage is precisely that it permits both the Old Testament prefigurement and its Christian realization to operate simultaneously, and within a context



Figure 12.5. An illustration of Ps 51.21 in the Chapel of Theotokos on Mount Nebo. After Michele Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan* (Amman, 1993).

that suggests historical reality.”²³ Because Jewish visual representations of the Temple in the synagogue precede the Christian visual manifestations of the connection between the church and the Temple, it seems that the latter was influenced by the former.

Depictions of Sacrificial Offerings in the Synagogue and the Church

By the sixth century, Tabernacle and Temple imagery was present in synagogues and churches in the Holy Land, functioning in both to convey multiple simultaneous meanings. Among the important differences, however, are the depictions of sacrificial offerings.

The representations of the Temple in the churches are always combined with illustrations relating to the sacrificial ceremonies. Several late antique Christian mosaics, for instance, feature a pair of bulls or a pair of lambs opposite each other, generally near the church altar or an altar depicted in the floor mosaic. Such depictions can be seen in the Church of the Lions (Figure 12.6),

the Church of the Rivers, the Church of the Priest Wa'il at Umm al-Rasas, and the mosaic from 'Ayn al-Kanish. In the Chapel of Theotokos on Mount Nebo, in the nave mosaic of the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat, and probably also in the church on the acropolis at Ma'in, a pair of bulls accompanied by a quotation from Ps 51.21 ("then bulls will be offered on the altar") provides us with a key for understanding the other depictions. This exact verse was recited by the participants in the daily liturgy of the church in Jerusalem.²⁴ On a church floor, it presents the idea that after Jesus offered himself and attained eternal redemption for his followers, there was no longer a need for blood sacrifice like those offered by ancient Jews in the Jerusalem Temple.



Figure 12.6. Pair of bulls flanking the altar in the Church of the Lions at Umm al-Rasas. After Michele Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan* (Amman, 1993).

Notably, this idea is found in the New Testament and early Christian literature, together with the use of images of bulls and other sacrificial animals to articulate the significance of the death of Jesus. In the words of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*: “He entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God?” (Heb 9.12–14; NRSV). This perception of sacrifice also underlies the daily mass, in which the offering of Jesus is symbolically presented by the bread and wine.

The *Epistle of Barnabas* draws a parallel between Jesus and the cow that was slaughtered and burned on the altar, and whose ashes were scattered on the people to cleanse them of their sins (*Barn.* 8),²⁵ and Tertullian likens Jesus to a bull (*Marcionem* 3.18.14–26).²⁶ Justin Martyr claims that the two goats in the liturgy of the Temple on the Day of Atonement, mentioned in Lev 16.7–10, refer to two aspects of Jesus: the scapegoat sent into the wilderness is Jesus who suffers and dies; the goat designated as a sin offering to the Lord is Christ triumphant (*Dial.* 30.4). Just as these second- and third-century Christian writings shed light on the symbolism of sacrificial offerings in late antique churches, so we can learn the significance of depicting two lambs next to the altar from the words of Cyril of Alexandria. In one of his letters, the fifth-century bishop appealed to the medium of painting to help Acacius understand how the two lambs that were required in the Jewish Tabernacle could both represent Jesus (Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep.* 41, PG 77.217–220).²⁷

Also instructive is the comparison of Jewish and Christian uses of similar imagery. In the floor mosaic in the presbytery of the Chapel of Theotokos, in the monastery at ‘Ayn al-Kanish, one can discern a pair of lambs against the background of a fruit tree on either side of a curtain suspended between two columns, and above them an arch decorated with a conch pattern.²⁸ This depiction resembles the mosaic decorating the panel adjacent to the secondary bema in the synagogue at Susiya (Figure 12.7),²⁹ in the center of which are depictions of holy utensils used in Jewish ritual—the “sacred facade” flanked by a seven-branched candelabra and two rams.

This similarity does not indicate an identical significance. In particular, we might sharpen the contrast between the Chapel of Theotokos at ‘Ayn al-Kanish and the depiction at Susiya by pointing out the difference in the

rendition of the “sacred architectural facade”—the central motif in both depictions.³⁰ At Susiya, as in the depictions in all the other synagogue mosaics, the prominent components are the two wooden doors of the entrance; the curtain is not shown. At ‘Ayn al-Kanisah,³¹ the important component is the curtain tied in its center; the wooden doors are absent.

The focus on the curtain in the Christian example corresponds to a rich complex of traditions interpreting the veil of the Holy of the Holies in relation to the death of Jesus. The *Epistle to the Hebrews*, for instance, likens the veil to Jesus’ own flesh: “[S]ince we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the veil, that is, through his flesh . . . let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith” (Heb 10.19–22; NRSV). The Christological meaning of the veil of the Holy of Holies also appears in the writings of fourth- and fifth-century Christian theologians such as John Chrysostom and Cyril of Alexandria (Chrysostom, *Hom. Heb.* 10.21, PG 63.152A; Cyril, *Quod unus sit Christus*, PG 75.1253A–B). Sources describing the church sometimes mention a curtain that apparently hid the church altar and strengthened the concept of a bounded area for the priests, where the altar served as a sort of Holy of Holies.³²

Understood in this context, the imagery of the pair of lambs not only represents the two daily sacrifices offered in the Tabernacle and Temple that were replaced by the offering of Jesus but also symbolizes the permanence of



Figure 12.7. The panel adjacent to the secondary bema in the synagogue at Susiya. Courtesy of the Center for Jewish Art, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

the divine promise, the one given at the binding of Isaac and the one made by the Lamb of God. Just as both covenants are parts of one truth, with the biblical promise realized in the Christian Gospel, so the Temple curtain could be invoked to explain their relationship. Writing in the sixth century, for instance, Constantine of Antioch proclaims: “[N]ow, my friends, the blood of Jesus makes us free to enter boldly into the sanctuary by the new, living way which he has opened for us through the curtain, the way of his flesh” (*Christian Topography* 10.29).³³ A similar connection is made in the first *troparion* recited as part of the liturgy of Jerusalem about a week after Palm Sunday, when the public had gathered in front of Golgotha to commemorate the suffering of Jesus on the cross: “Today the Temple curtain is torn as a proof to sinners, and the sun hides its light on seeing the crucified Lord.” Significantly, for our purposes, the word “sinners” here is directed at the Jews.³⁴

Of course, the imagery of sacrifice is not absent from contemporary synagogal art. The subject of offerings is given ample emphasis in the Sepphoris mosaic, appearing repeatedly on the floor in three of the seven registers (in the representation of the binding of Isaac, the panel relating to the daily offering, and the depiction of the consecration of Aaron to the service of the Tabernacle). The depictions in Sepphoris can be understood primarily in terms of the perception that the worship of God in the Temple was temporarily replaced by prayer in the synagogue. Nevertheless, one cannot ignore that the Jewish mosaic—in contrast to its Christian counterparts—was proclaiming blood sacrifices as the true path.

Christian representations of the Tabernacle and Temple are also informed by a complex of exegetical traditions about paradise, which are ultimately rooted in Second Temple Jewish traditions but took on distinctively Christian forms in Late Antiquity. It is worth noting that the bulls or rams depicted on either side of an altar (in the mosaic or the church altar itself) often appear near portrayals of fruit trees and *philia* scenes (Figures 12.5 and 12.6). Fruit trees are an important part of the Christian imagery of earthly paradise, which is based on Gen 2.8–9 (“And Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God grow every tree that is pleased to the sight, and good for food”). The writings of the church fathers often liken the Church to paradise.³⁵ The combined composition clearly indicates that paradise is not simply a geographical designation; it is imagined as a place where life with the deity is offered and therefore explicitly connected to the liturgy. The proximity of the depiction to the church altar indicates

that this is not merely a declaration of the Christian doctrine of salvation but also a perceptible expression of the role of the church establishment in the realization of redemption. The attainment of Christian salvation calls for participation in the liturgy, and thus the location of these themes in the presbytery is a matter of both time and space.³⁶ The worshiper sees them when approaching the bema to receive the Eucharist. Paradise is not just a concrete place upon earth; it was understood as a state of bliss that would be restored in the church. It remains accessible for the faithful who believe in Christ—not only in eschatological times but even before his Second Coming.³⁷

The common Christian juxtaposition of the representation of Eden with that of the Temple clearly draws upon Second Temple Jewish exegetical traditions.³⁸ In the book of Jubilees, for instance, Eden is tantamount to the Holy of Holies: “And he shall know that paradise is the Holy of Holies and there God dwells” (8.19).³⁹ As Gary Anderson has shown, the identification of paradise and the church presumes a prior equation of Eden with the Temple in Zion; in between the primordial paradise of Genesis and the eschatological paradise exist the cultic institutions of Temple and Church.⁴⁰ Interestingly, portrayals of paradise are completely missing from the repertoire of Jewish iconography in Late Antiquity—perhaps consistent with the lesser status granted to the synagogue.

Representations of Earthly and Heavenly Jerusalem

In the Jewish art of Late Antiquity, depictions of the present earthly city of Jerusalem are strikingly absent. The historical or eschatological city of Jerusalem is represented only by means of the Tabernacle and the Temple’s sacred utensils. The omission of Jerusalem from the repertoire of Jewish art at that time may best be understood against the background of the profound changes taking place there. Jerusalem, after all, was the first place transformed into a Christian “Holy Land”;⁴¹ the erection of memorial churches in the city by Constantine led to its Christianization and its emergence as a focus of Christian pilgrimage, despite the reservations of some learned Christians in this regard.⁴²

These architectural changes seem to have been paired with demographic shifts. In the early fourth century, the Bordeaux Pilgrim (333 ce) informs us of the intensive Christian activity in Jerusalem.⁴³ Early Byzantine hagiographical

sources claim that in the year that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was consecrated, Constantine renewed the prohibition on Jews residing in the city—a stricture originally imposed in the days of Hadrian.⁴⁴ Jews were allowed to mourn for the city once a year, on the Ninth of Av; but this, too, was done in a degrading manner.

In contrast to the complete omission of representations of the present city of Jerusalem in Jewish art, elements referring to concrete Christian *loca sancta* in Jerusalem started to appear in church symbolism in the sixth century. Thus, for example, the *Syrian Hymn for the Cathedral of Edessa*, mentioned above, represents the church not just as Tabernacle and Temple but also as a microcosm containing elements relating to Christian holy places in Jerusalem. The ambo was made “after the model of the upper room of Zion,” and a column bearing a cross, which stood between the ambo and the presbytery, is claimed to represent Golgotha (*Syrian Hymn for the Cathedral of Edessa* 15–16).

Similar connections are made by Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem (560–638), in his *Commentarius liturgicus*, in answer to the question: What is a church, and what is the explanation for its various parts and contents? He explains that the apse originates from the cave in Bethlehem and the cave in which the Lord was buried. The *synthronon* is in the form of the heavenly throne, and it is so called because the Father and the Son sit on it together, and God-fearing priests are also seated together on it, as if crucified together with the messiah. The *prothesis* (altar) is the site of Golgotha, where the Lord was crucified. The lit candelabra are symbols of the stars, and the bema is a model of heaven where the angels serve God; only on the sacred bema, the priests stand like seraphim. Sophronius adds another explanation: the bema symbolizes the Second Coming of the messiah, and there he will judge. The chancel screen symbolizes that of the Holy Sepulchre, and only priests may cross it. The *solea* is like the river of fire, separating the sinners from the righteous (Sophronius, *Commentarius liturgicus*, PG 82.3).

The *Historia mystagogica*, attributed to the patriarch Germanus I of Constantinople (715–730), also reflects the multilayered symbolic significance given to the church building, combining elements of the historical and eschatological Jerusalem: “The church is a heaven on earth wherein the heavenly God ‘dwells and walks.’ It is glorified above Moses’ tabernacle of testimony, on which were the mercy-seat and the holy of holies.” The ciborium symbolizes the place of the crucifixion, but “it is also after the manner of the ark of the

covenant of the Lord.” The area bounding the chancel screen is compared to the Holy of Holies.⁴⁵

The representation of the Christian *loca sancta* by means of the liturgical furniture enables the congregants to perform a pilgrimage within the church building. Participation in the liturgy thus became a journey that fulfilled the needs of believers who sought direct contact with the holy sites.⁴⁶ The final goal of this internal journey is the heavenly city; thus the physical church building, and the presbytery in particular, in addition to the role as a substitution for the Tabernacle and the Temple, symbolize the heavenly Jerusalem.⁴⁷

In the diocese of Madaba, the earthly Jerusalem is depicted in three mosaic floors: the Church of the Map at Madaba (dated to the third quarter of the sixth century), the Church of Saint Stephen at Umm al-Rasas (laid in 718),⁴⁸ and the Church on the Acropolis at Maʿin (dated to 719–720). Although these mosaics have attracted much attention, scholars have ignored the location of the images of the earthly Jerusalem within the churches and, as a result, have missed its status in relation to the heavenly city.

The most famous and detailed depiction of earthly Jerusalem appears in the Church of the Map at Madaba (Figure 12.8). Jerusalem is portrayed as a large city, in greater detail than the other towns, and is located in the center of the map. The Anastasis (Church of the Sepulchre) is shown in the center of the city. Surprisingly, the base of the column in the northern gate of the city’s wall—known today as the Damascus Gate, or Bab el-ʿAmud (Gate of the Column) in Arabic (whose name retains the memory of that monument)—forms the center of the map.⁴⁹ The idea behind this arrangement was possibly to support the conception of Jerusalem as the center of the world.⁵⁰ The column in the Damascus Gate replaced the *Milliarium Aureum* (the gilded bronze milestone) that stood in the Roman forum and was regarded as the meeting point of all roads converging on that city. The local town of Madaba was probably depicted along the central axis of the mosaic, near the entrance to the church’s presbytery.

To understand the significance of the mosaic map, we should pay heed to its location within the church building and the way it is incorporated into the liturgy (Figure 12.9). The map is located in the eastern part of the nave, outside the limits of the sanctorum that is surrounded by a chancel screen. The mosaic covers the entire area from the southern wall of the church to its northern wall.

Michael Avi-Yonah conjectured that the mosaic must have been bounded



Figure 12.8. Earthly Jerusalem in the Church of the Map at Madaba. After Michele Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan* (Amman, 1993).

by some sort of parapet: “In any case we must assume that the map was separated from the nave by some partition, for it is most unlikely that the laity would be allowed to walk over the Holy City and the other sacred sites represented on the map.”⁵¹ This does not seem plausible. The exclusion of the faithful from the area on which the mosaic was laid would have disrupted the liturgical functioning of the church, since it would have unreasonably distanced the altar, on which the rite of the Eucharist took place, from the congregants, who would have been crammed into a narrow space constituting half the area of the nave. This theory is further supported by the fact that none of the buildings appearing in the mosaic bears a cross, as mentioned by Pauline Donceel-Voûte.⁵²

Unfortunately, the mosaic in the presbytery of the church in question has

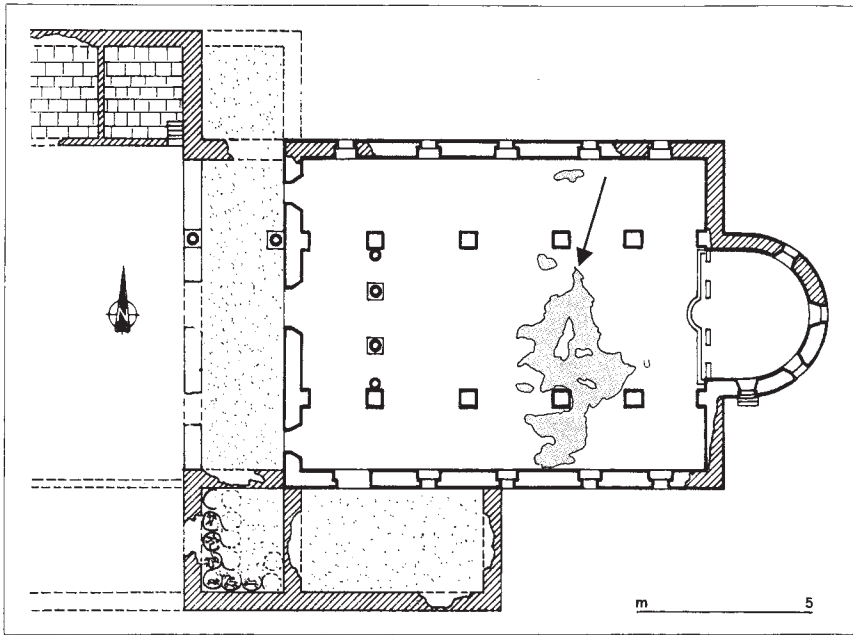


Figure 12.9. The Church of the Map at Madaba and its mosaic. After Michele Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan* (Amman, 1993).

not survived, but in view of the evidence of several of the mosaics decorating this area in churches in the diocese of Madaba in the second half of the sixth century, it would not be far-fetched to assume that those responsible for the church's decorative scheme intended to signal a connection to the sacrifice of Jesus, either by the depiction of a lone lamb against the background of a fruit tree (as in the Church of Saint George at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat), a pair of lambs or bulls beside the altar (as in the Church of the Lions at Umm al-Rasas and in the Chapel of Theotokos on Mount Nebo), a curtain (similar to that at 'Ayn al-Kanish), or a fruit tree (as, for example, in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat). The mosaic of Ma'in, discussed below, could provide another allusion to such a decorative scheme.

The location of the Madaba mosaic map in the church and its incorporation into such a decorative scheme clarify the approach of the bishop of Madaba (John, Sergius, or Leontius) in the debate on pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to Jerusalem, in particular—a debate richly reflected in patristic and monastic writings from Late Antiquity. The Christian

attitudes toward pilgrimage are varied, ranging from rejection or apathy to vacillation or adjustment of one's stance as a result of social relationships, ecclesiastical crises, or theological controversies.⁵³ I suggest that the bishop of Madaba's attitude toward pilgrimage, as reflected in the Church of the Map, was similar to Jerome's position, which vacillated between support and reservation.⁵⁴

Jerome, who was active in the Holy Land and died in 420, preached on various occasions about the importance of concrete, material links with the Holy Land as a way of understanding the Holy Scriptures. In the preface to his translation of the book of Chronicles, he clearly expresses the idea that just as seeing Athens enhances one's understanding of Greek history, so does seeing the ruins of the ancient cities of Judaea enhance one's understanding of the Holy Scriptures.⁵⁵ Notwithstanding his own warm relationship with the Holy Land, his attitude is complex and not always consistent; for example, in his epistle to Presbyter Paulinus, he advises the latter not to go to Jerusalem, by saying, *inter alia*, that God is not enclosed within a confined land; no one is obliged to pray in Jerusalem in particular or on Mount Gerizim, as there is no place unoccupied by the Holy Spirit. Jerome also stresses that access to the courts of heaven is as easy from Britain as it is from Jerusalem, since God's kingdom is within us.⁵⁶

The position of the Madaba mosaic map in the church's nave enabled the planners to bridge between Christian conceptions of the Promised Land and Jerusalem that took shape when Jerusalem was a pagan city and those conceptions that arose when there was a great change in the city's character and buildings in the days of Constantine, and even more so in those of Justinian.⁵⁷ Called "The Holy City Jerusalem," it was impossible to ignore the flourishing Christian city and its splendid churches, which were the focus of pilgrimage and Christian rule in the Holy Land.⁵⁸ The mosaic map expresses the revered and central status of the city—for the inhabitants of Madaba, Jerusalem was the center of the world, notwithstanding its peripheral location vis-à-vis Constantinople or Rome. Yet the location of the depiction in the nave, in a place meant to be trodden on by the congregants, makes it clear that although this place of honor was reserved for the present city of Jerusalem, it remained the earthly Jerusalem. The depiction in the presbytery, and even more so the Eucharist ceremony on the church's altar, by contrast, were directed toward heavenly Jerusalem, as suggested by Ps 87.2: "The Lord has loved the Gate of Zion more than the tents of Jacob"—a verse incorporated into the mosaic at the foot of the presbytery in the Church of Bishop

Sergius at Umm al-Rasas.⁵⁹ The term “Zion” here refers to the City of God. Moreover, the placement of the mosaic in an area meant to be walked on made it possible for one to make a virtual, or spiritual, pilgrimage within the walls of the church and through its liturgy. The encounter with the sacred is achieved by performing the ritual of the Eucharist. Christ is to be approached not through physical pilgrimage to places but through liturgical celebration. Thus, the mosaic affirms the absolute centrality of the Eucharist in the life of the church.

The Church of Saint Stephen at Umm al-Rasas also features mosaics with depictions of cities in the Holy Land, among them Jerusalem (Figures 12.10 and 12.11). In the narrow spaces between the pillars, separating the nave from the aisles, are depictions of eight cities west of the Jordan (on the northern side) and seven cities east of the Jordan (on the southern side). The first cities to the east are Jerusalem and opposite it *Kastron Mefaa* (that is, Umm al-Rasas).⁶⁰ Jerusalem is here labeled “Holy City” (*hagia polis*), and in its center, there is a round building with a conical ceiling supported by columns. Nearby is a basilical structure, in all likelihood the artist’s rendering of the complex of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

In studies of the mosaics of Jordan, the mosaic of the Church of Saint Stephen at Umm al-Rasas is generally presented together with the map mosaic at Madaba as impressive examples of the topographical trend characterizing the region in the Byzantine and Umayyad periods. Indeed, the two mosaics share the local topography of the Holy Land as a means of signifying the cultural identity of the community. However, there are also basic points of difference.

As we have seen, the Madaba map is not just a realistic map testifying to the permanent settlement of territory but also an expression of mythical geography based on the reading of Scriptures. The map had liturgical significance and served as an alternative to pilgrimage to the holy places themselves, including through the recitation of biblical passages. The representation of the cities in the Saint Stephen mosaic reflects a different idea, as well as a different motive for choosing the subject.

The Saint Stephen mosaic refers only to the Christian present. The cities on either side of the Jordan depicted in the mosaic express the continued physical presence of Christian communities in the Holy Land. The biblical past of the cities does not play a role in their inclusion, and the absence of important Christian sites such as Nazareth and Bethlehem is striking. The list of depicted cities includes primarily those cities with a Christian majority, and it disregards the changes that had taken place in the settlement

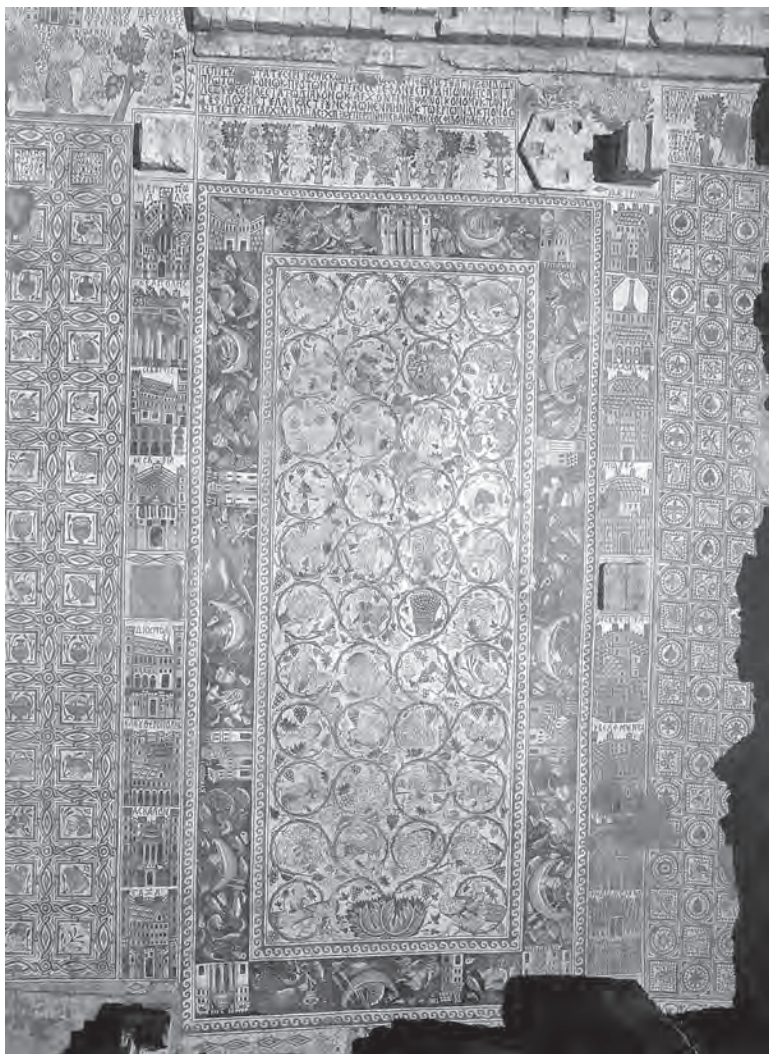


Figure 12.10. The Church of Saint Stephen at Umm al-Rasas, general view. After Michele Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan* (Amman, 1993).



Figure 12.II. Earthly Jerusalem in the Church of Saint Stephen at Umm al-Rasas.
After Michele Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan* (Amman, 1993).

picture following the Muslim conquest and the administrative division carried out by the Umayyads. The depiction of the cities on both sides of the Jordan conveys a covert political message that no change had occurred in the Christian character of the land, since Christianity was still the majority religion, despite the appropriation of the country by a foreign government.

Various Christian sources attribute to 'Abd al-Malik and Caliph Umar II (717–720) an order to remove all crosses from the public domain.⁶¹ 'Abd al-Malik and his heirs also enforced the use of Arabic in the public administration, and Umar launched a campaign to Islamicize his realm and instituted a policy of drawing the subject populations to Islam by exempting converts from paying taxes.⁶² These changes in the relationships between the Christian population and the Muslim rulers, the purpose of which was to change the cultural identity of the country, help us understand the representation of Christian topography in the Saint Stephen mosaic.

The unsuccessful attempt of the Umayyads to conquer Constantinople in 718 may have given additional impetus to this patriotic Christian reaction. A new mosaic was laid in the presbytery of the Church of Saint Stephen in 756. We do not know why the earlier mosaic was replaced with a new one in this part of the church in particular; and obviously, we do not know what was depicted in the old mosaic. The earlier eighth-century mosaic may have been figurative, continuing the iconographic schemes typical of the mosaics from the late sixth-century Umm al-Rasas. If so, it may have contained two lambs or bulls flanking the altar, trees laden with fruit, and an idyllic scene signifying peace in the world of animals and humans. This mosaic, like the other figurative depictions in the church, was probably defaced. In 756, when the community had the appropriate financial resources, the damaged floor was replaced with a geometric mosaic that was more in keeping with the trends of the time.

Only a year after the laying of the mosaic in the Church of Saint Stephen at Umm al-Rasas, another floor depicting similar subjects was laid in the Church of the Acropolis at Ma'in.⁶³ The nave was decorated with a populated geometric mosaic carpet composed of pairs of interlocking truncated rhombi that formed hexagons and rhombi. One of the carpet's borders featured populated acanthus medallions against a black background, and another depicted cities and towns in the Holy Land separated by fruit trees and identified by Greek inscriptions. The depiction of Jerusalem has not survived, but we would be hard pressed not to assume that it was not included in the mosaic. Was it located in the center of the southern end, opposite Ma'in?

Or was it accorded an important place in the center of the eastern end, near the doorway of the presbytery? Only traces of the towns on the eastern side of the mosaic are preserved, but it is most probable that the central one was Jerusalem.

The church at Ma'in, like earlier churches in the diocese of Madaba, has a multilayered symbolic significance (Figure 12.12). In addition to being a Christian microcosm, it was considered a replacement for the Jewish Temple. A panel at the eastern end of the nave bears an inscription based on Ps 51.21: "Then there will be offered bulls on your altar, O Lord." From the size of this panel and the little that remains of it, one may conclude that this passage was accompanied by an illustration, perhaps similar to the one in the Chapel of Theotokos on Mount Nebo, or the one in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat. The Jerusalem to which a person should aspire is not the earthly city, depicted in the border of the nave mosaic next to the other cities, but a heavenly city, symbolized by the Temple.

This distinction between earthly and heavenly Jerusalem had already made its appearance in the Madaba map mosaic. The Madaba mosaic map does not ignore the honored status of Jerusalem, with its many churches, but it expresses a complex perception that earthly Jerusalem was less important than its heavenly counterpart. When the mosaics of Ma'in and the Church of Saint Stephen at Umm al-Rasas were laid, Jerusalem was lost to the Muslims; this painful situation undoubtedly sharpened these hierarchic relations.

An inscription in a *tabula ansata* at the entrance of the church begins and ends with biblical verses: "This is the door of the Lord; the just shall enter through it" (Ps 98.20); and "The Lord has loved the gate of Zion more than the tents of Jacob" (Ps 87.2). The latter quotation also appears near the southern entrance to the Church of Horvath Hesheq (dated 518/519) in Galilee,⁶⁴ and, as noted above, it is included in the mosaic at the foot of the presbytery in the Church of Bishop Sergius at Umm al-Rasas. Verse 3 of this psalm mentions the "City of God"; from this, we may surmise that the term "Zion" in the inscriptions signifies Jerusalem, the heavenly city of God.⁶⁵ Often the presbytery in the earthly church symbolizes heavenly Jerusalem, but sometimes it is ascribed to the church as a whole. Already in the fourth century—as we have seen—Eusebius applied an allegorical interpretation to the church at Tyre; the physical church was "an intellectual image upon earth of those things which lie above the vault of heaven" (Eusebius, *HE* 10.4.70)—that is, the heavenly Jerusalem.⁶⁶

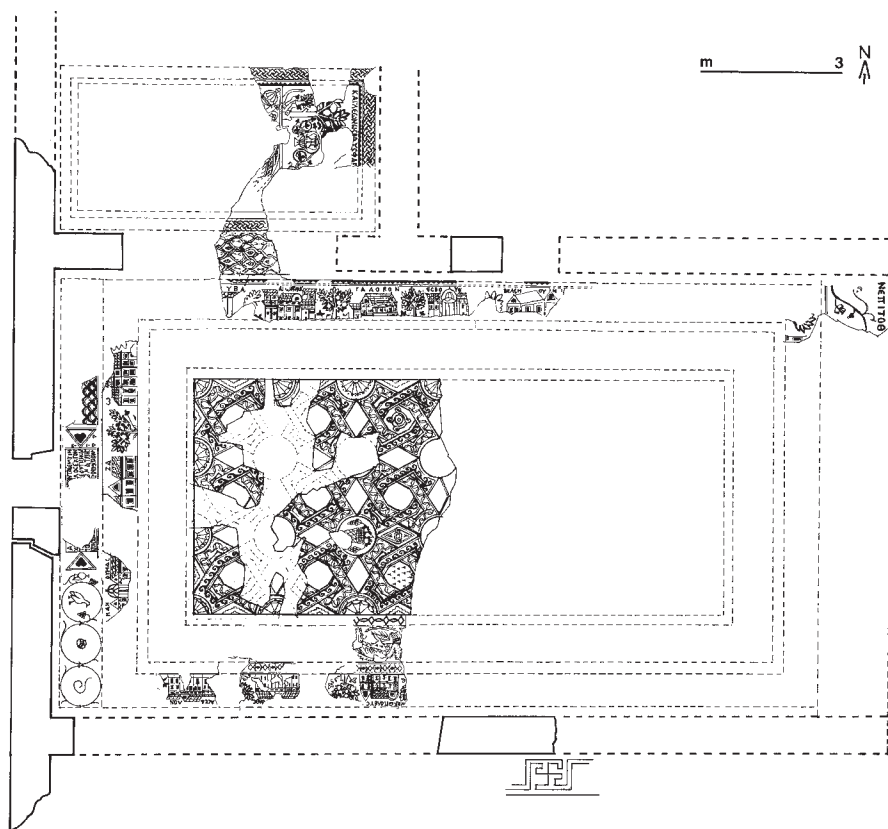


Figure 12.12. The church at Ma'in and its mosaic. After Michele Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan* (Amman, 1993).

The term “Zion,” as indicated by the inscriptions, is reserved for heavenly Jerusalem, whereas the earthly Jerusalem in the Madaba map is called the Holy City of Jerusalem, and in the Church of Saint Stephen at Umm al-Rasas, it is just labeled “Holy City.” Earthly Jerusalem is a polis. Considered in their broader context, then, the inscriptions in the mosaics may reflect the controversy between Judaism and Christianity. Judaism (“the tents of Jacob”), including biblical Jerusalem, the earthly city in which blood sacrifices were offered, is deemed to have been rejected by God in favor of the church in this world (“Israel of the spirit”), which forms a gate to the heavenly and eternal city of God (“Zion”).

In any case, the contrast with contemporary Jewish traditions remains

striking. Above, we noted the absence of representations of the present, earthly Jerusalem in the Jewish art of Late Antiquity. There is a similar silence in the classical rabbinic literature concerning the heavenly Jerusalem. As pointed out by Ephraim Urbach, there is no reference to heavenly Jerusalem in tannaitic traditions, and it is mentioned only once in the amoraic era.⁶⁷ In the Babylonian Talmud (bTa'an 5a), R. Yohanan attributes a secondary role to the heavenly Jerusalem, stating that God first enters earthly Jerusalem and only then enters the heavenly one. In contrast to Urbach, I suggest that the main reason for the removal of heavenly Jerusalem from the rabbinic writings may be its significance among late antique Christians.

Conclusion

Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity were interested in creating an analogy between the Tabernacle and the Temple, on the one hand, and their houses of prayer, on the other. Although the idea seems to have emerged around the same time in both traditions, the timing of its application to synagogue and church decoration was different. In Jewish art, the decorative scheme that reflects this idea appeared in the third century in synagogues. In the decorative scheme of churches in the Holy Land, it first appeared in the sixth century. The multiple meanings attributed to church buildings—simultaneously evoking the remote and recent historical past, the present, and the future—are paralleled in the various layers characterizing the sacred utensils panel in the synagogues. Both share an intentional lack of clarity regarding the boundaries of time and place, resulting in a transcendental quality to the prayer and worship within the structures.

Late antique Jews and Christians each gave their own distinct interpretation to the ceremonies that had taken place in the Tabernacle and the Temple and that had become an integral part of synagogue and church liturgies. In both Judaism and Christianity, art played a didactic role in explaining rituals. There is a general similarity in the depiction of the sacrificial offerings in the Tabernacle and Temple in the Sepphoris and Susiya synagogues, on the one hand, and in the mosaics of 'Ayn al-Kanisah, the Chapel of Theotokos on Mount Nebo, and the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat, on the other.⁶⁸ This similarity should not mislead us: similar artistic vocabulary could be used to express opposing perceptions and positions. Were those who commissioned these mosaics aware of the degree of

their similarity to those appearing on the “other side”? I am inclined to believe that they were. The shared visual images, their similar location in the general decorative composition, and their common didactic role in the explanation of liturgical acts and objects indicate the interrelationship between Judaism and Christianity in the Holy Land in Late Antiquity. The differences in details, some of which I have mentioned above, also testify to the response of each to the rival faith.

The depiction of the Holy Land, and especially the earthly and heavenly Jerusalem, transformed the church building into an eschatological landscape. The representation of elements referring to concrete Christian *loca sancta* in the Holy Land, and especially in Jerusalem, enabled believers to perform an internal pilgrimage (*peregrinatio interiora*) within the church as part of its liturgy. The depiction of the topography of the Holy Land and the representation of the holy sites of Jerusalem and Bethlehem served as a bridge between those who saw the importance of real contact with the Holy Land as a way of understanding the Holy Scriptures and those who took the contradictory approach, which is reflected mainly in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*.

The distinction between earthly and heavenly Jerusalem is not always kept. Thus, for example, in the homily attributed to John, bishop of Jerusalem, it is not always clear to which of the two Jerusalems he refers. In the *Commentarius liturgicus* of Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem (560–638), the bema and its furniture represent the Holy Sepulchre and Golgotha, but they are also a model of heaven. By contrast, in the Madaba map mosaic and the Church of the Acropolis at Maʿin, there is an unambiguous division between earthly and heavenly Jerusalem. The continuity between the two cities is established through a contrast that emphasizes the superiority of the heavenly Jerusalem. Just as the Christian appropriation of Tabernacle and Temple imagery may have prompted the Jewish integration of similar imagery into synagogues, so the importance of Jerusalem in the Christian sphere may have led to its erasure from the rabbinic writings and the art of the synagogues alike.

Roman Christianity and the Post-Roman West: The Social Correlates of the *Contra Iudaeos* Tradition

PAULA FREDRIKSEN

This is for Ora.

Christianity was born in an argument over how to understand Jewish texts. While the biblical traditions referred to by Jesus of Nazareth would most likely have been in Hebrew or Aramaic, the texts and the arguments that shaped Christianity's future were in Greek. Greek did more than make the new movement available to a wider world, both Jewish and pagan. It also made those Hellenistic Jewish texts that most mattered to the movement—the Septuagint (LXX), Paul's letters, various early gospels—interpretively compatible with three important traditions from pagan high culture: ethnographical stereotyping, forensic rhetoric, and philosophical *paideia*. From these elements, Christian traditions *contra Iudaeos* took shape.

In this essay, I propose to trace the growth and effects of Christian rhetoric *contra Iudaeos* in three related but distinct historical moments: in Roman imperial culture pre-Constantine; in Roman Christian culture post-Constantine; and in the Christian culture of post-Roman, post-Arian Spain (589–711 CE). My goal is, first, to understand how this discourse functioned in its communities of origin and, second, to see whether and how the church's "hermeneutical Jew" (the "Jew" as a figure for wrongly reading the Bible) and the church's and the government's "rhetorical Jew" (the "Jew" as a polemical anti-Self) related to the social experience of real Jews—and of real Christians. To what degree, if any, did Christian rhetoric *contra Iudaeos* shape Roman and post-Roman social reality?

When late first- and early second-century Christians began to dispute with one another over the right way to be Christian, they could turn to two layers of paleo-Christian tradition for their models: the ancient biblical stories in the Septuagint; and the first-century writings of Paul, of the later evangelists, and of other early authors. In the Septuagint, from Exodus to Deuteronomy, God and Moses complained to each other about Israel's behavior, while prophets thundered against other Jews' practices and the psalmist lamented their sins. In first-century writings, Paul bitterly criticized his apostolic competitors ("Are they Hebrews? So am I! Are they Israelites? So am I! Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I! Are they ministers of Christ? . . . I am a better one!"; 2 Cor 11.22–23), while the evangelists' Jesus took on scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and priests. In brief, these Hellenistic Jewish texts, with all their intra-Jewish arguments, were a gold mine for later Christian rhetoric *contra Iudaeos*.

These criticisms of Jews and of Judaism native to Jewish texts were enhanced by the "rhetorical Jews" of learned pagan ethnography. Empire had provided ample opportunity for Graeco-Roman literate elites to comment on barbarian "others." These others served as an occasion to articulate the inverse of the ideal Self.¹ Thus, Greeks were virile, while Persians were effeminate; Greeks were rational, while Egyptians were irrational; Romans were pious, while Jews were impious; Romans were civilized, while Germans were savage; and so on.² Graeco-Roman ethnographers did attribute terrible behaviors to Jews: Jews, they said, were antisocial, secretive, clannish, and sexually profligate; they sacrificed humans and occasionally ate them.³ But these ethnographers also put Egyptians, Persians, Scythians, Gauls, Britons, and Germans to such use. The fact that we know so much more about pagan anti-Jewish stereotypes than we do about the stereotyping of these others is directly attributable to the activity of later Christians, who preserved the hostile pagan remarks against Jews while augmenting them with genres all their own.⁴

The adversarial conventions of Graeco-Roman rhetorical culture also enhanced Christian discourse *contra Iudaeos*. These modes of argumentation had deep roots, which went back to the days of the classical polis. Two later social settings had radically stabilized and perpetuated the polis curriculum: institutions of secondary education (Hellenistic gymnasia earlier; Roman-era schools later) and the chambers of municipal governments (whether city councils or courts of law). From one generation to the next, the learned and literate—for the most part sons of urban elites—were taught how to present a persuasive case for *and* against some proposition by orally rehearsing traditional

arguments and their traditional, coordinating counterarguments. This mode of education, propelled by and propelling public disputation, instructed the student not in how to interpret a text (a will, a contract, a treaty, a poem) but in how to conduct an argument about how to interpret a text. Its goal was persuasion, its representation of the contending Other not descriptive but polemical. By the second century CE, this contentious way of framing discussions about meaning, together with its stock of insults, challenges, and defenses, had passed easily into Christian theological production, and thus into the Christian anti-Jewish repertoire.⁵

Philosophical *paideia*, particularly its Platonizing strains, set the terms of learned theology and thereby contributed crucially to Christian groundswells of anti-Jewish rhetoric. All ancient Christian theologians, whatever their doctrinal persuasion, adopted philosophy's definition of the high god as perfect, changeless, utterly without body; and they identified that god with the father of Christ. All assumed, therefore, that the active god described in Genesis was a lower god, a demiurge or *kosmokrator*. (For Valentinus and Marcion, this lower god, the god of the Jews, was Christ's opponent; for Justin, this lower god *was* Christ, active in history before his incarnation; *Dialogue with Trypho* 56–62.) All took for granted that matter, the unstable substratum of the visible cosmos, was in some way defective, whether materially or morally. Accordingly, these theologians praised and valued sexual renunciation over sexual activity and childbirth, associating the former with "mind" or "spirit" and the latter with "body" or "flesh." Serving as binary opposites, these paired terms also coded hermeneutics: to interpret a text or teaching correctly was to understand "according to the spirit"; to do so incorrectly was to understand "according to the flesh." Invariably, then, Jewish interpretive positions or religious practices, real or imagined, ancient or contemporary, were identified as "fleshly." Adopting and adapting the intra-pagan arguments originally deployed by the Academy against Stoic defenders of traditional Mediterranean cult, Christian authors denounced Jewish sacrifices as intrinsically wrong-headed, implicitly idolatrous, and offensive to true piety and to God.⁶

The criticisms of Jews and of Judaism available in Jewish texts; the hostile caricatures of Jews available in learned Graeco-Roman ethnographies; the polarizing and polemical nature of rhetorical culture; and the metaphysics implicit in antiquity's philosophical koine: these four factors combined to provide flexible, powerful, and extremely long-lived rhetorical traditions of Christian anti-Judaism. The full arsenal of arguments is already well displayed in the mid-second century, in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*. The old

Mosaic law, Justin explains, was not a privilege but a punishment, earned by the Jews' stubborn sinfulness: understood "spiritually," Jewish Scripture actually encodes allegories or typologies of Christ (for example, *Dial.* 11–14, 18, 21–22, and frequently). Israel's Temple service, unspiritual in itself, had served merely to temper the perennial Jewish tendency to worship idols (*Dial.* 32). The heroes of Jewish Scripture—Moses, David, the prophets—had actually spoken about Christ; but the Jews, interpreting in a "fleshly" way, misunderstood this reference. Once Christ, the lower god active in Jewish Scripture, finally did appear in the flesh, Jews rejected his teachings and murdered him, just as they had done to the prophets before him and just as they still try to do to Justin's Christian contemporaries. It is on account of the proverbially stony Jewish heart, Justin concludes, that God gave Israel so many bad laws, that he destroyed the Jews' Temple, and that he drove the Jews into perpetual exile (*Dial.* 16, and frequently).

The tropes of this anti-Jewish rhetoric did double duty. They initially provided some gentile Christians with an apology vis-à-vis contemporary critics, whether pagans, other Christians, or Jews, to explain why their community revered the Septuagint as Christian Scripture while forgoing most of the practices that it enjoined ("fleshly" circumcision, food laws, Sabbath, and so on). *But these arguments had an even longer future as weapons of choice in entirely gentile Christian debates.* To whatever degree such rhetoric might have been useful when dealing with Jews, it served especially well to articulate the principles of "orthodox" identity against the insidious challenge of alternative forms of *gentile* Christianity—this is how Marcion, for example, ends up condemned for acting and thinking like a "Jew" (Tertullian, *c. Marcionem*, book 3 *passim*). Intriguingly, the harshest rhetoric *contra Iudaeos* appears not in apologies written against Jews but in attacks against other "heretical" Christians.⁷ The lush development of Christian rhetoric *contra Iudaeos* in the second and third centuries can be attributed in no small way to the energetic and untrammelled diversity of second- and third-century gentile Christianities.

What about the social context of this harsh and polarizing language? Is the language itself evidence that Christians and Jews had stopped talking with each other or, on the contrary, evidence that the two communities remained in contact? Scholarly opinion on this issue is divided. Shared exegetical traditions certainly imply continuing contact, even if this evidence turns up in precisely those authors, such as Justin and Tertullian, who repudiate Judaism most vigorously.⁸ Perhaps, then, the vituperation indexes not difference as such but, on the contrary, a strenuous effort to *make* a difference.⁹ Was this

contact in part competitive? Was each community invested in missionary efforts to pagans? Again, scholarly opinion is divided. Some, pointing to pagan complaints about gentile Judaizing and to the incontrovertible fact that synagogues did receive non-Jews through conversion,¹⁰ argue that such data are best explained as evidence of Hellenistic Jewish missions to gentiles.¹¹ Others protest that conversion does not eo ipso imply mission and that seeing Judaizing and conversion as evidence of missions projects onto Judaism a definition of robust religiosity that is drawn utterly from the Christian phenomenon.¹² Whichever reconstruction one prefers, a presupposition of contact (whether hostile, friendly, or both) undergirds all. But the adversarial rhetoric qua rhetoric is part of the problem: its great formal stability hinders the effort to see in the surviving literature the actual beliefs, concerns, circumstances, and social behaviors of ideologically warring contemporaries.

Christian anti-Jewish rhetoric undergoes a second great period of hyperdevelopment, curiously, in the decades following Constantine's conversion. The emperor's patronage had dissolved so many of the previous period's uncertainties that this new surge of overheated oratory might seem counterintuitive. After all, by the mid-fourth century, the Septuagint had emphatically become the church's Old Testament; heresy had made the transition from being a form of name-calling to being a legal disability; the old Jewish homeland had become the new Christian Holy Land; and the church and its bishops were actively supported by imperial largesse. These new circumstances represent a clear victory for "orthodox" Christianity. Whence, then, its continuing and even increasing vituperation against the Jews?

Intra-Christian diversity, again, goes far in explaining this new bloom of rhetoric *contra Iudaeos*. Constantine's efforts to consolidate orthodoxy had resulted in the shocked recognition that the notionally united *catholica* encompassed many local variations in practice, discipline, belief, and doctrine. In short, the awareness and even the generation of difference were caused by the imperial consolidation itself. Creeds as consensus documents served as occasions for further fracturing. Coercive measures, at imperial initiative, soon followed.¹³ The resulting explosion of Christian debate led to heated exchanges of anti-Jewish accusations between warring individuals and doctrinal camps. Thus Athanasius condemned his Arian enemies in a conflict over the date of Easter;¹⁴ thus Faustus, the great spokesman for Latin Manichaeism, condemned catholic Christians;¹⁵ thus Jerome condemned Augustine in a debate over how to read Galatians;¹⁶ thus Chrysostom criticized members of his own congregation when they fraternized too closely with local Jews.¹⁷ To call

a Christian a “Jew” was to call him, in the most profound and definitive way possible, an un-Christian—indeed, an anti-Christian. In all forms of Christian literature from the fourth century onward, this “rhetorical Jew” figures prominently as a constitutive element of orthodox identity.

If the roiled state of fourth-century orthodoxy offered new opportunities for intra-Christian exchanges of anti-Jewish insults, it also led to ecclesiastical and imperial initiatives to try to curtail real contacts between Christians and Jews. In the corpora of church canons, we glimpse both the church’s concern to separate Christians from Jews and the sorts of normal social contacts that prevailed between these populations, as between pagans, Jews, and Christians of many sorts. Some Christians kept the Jewish Sabbath as a day of rest and worked on Sundays (Laodicea, canon 29); they received festival gifts from Jews and heretics (Laodicea, canon 37); they accepted matzah and participated in Jewish “impieties” (Laodicea, canon 38). They shared in Jewish fasts and feasts (Apostolic Canons, c. 70); tended lamps in synagogues on feast days (c. 71); joined with Jews and heretics in prayer (c. 65); and gave their children to Jews in marriage (Chalcedon, c. 14).¹⁸ And the Jewish calendar—especially the date of Passover relative to Easter—continued to influence Christian communal celebration, Constantine’s pointed efforts at Nicaea notwithstanding.¹⁹ These patterns of intercommunal socializing seem entrenched, which perhaps gives the measure of how long-lived they were. Had we relevant canons from second- and third-century councils, they might reveal the same behaviors.²⁰

Rhetorical anti-Judaism post-Constantine also metastasized into a new cultural area: Roman imperial law, which came to constitute its own sort of literature *adversus Iudaeos*. Imperial law indulged in the rhetorical humiliation of Judaism, which it characterized as a *feralis* and *nefaria secta* (CTh 18.8.1,2,8,9), a *sacrileges coetus* (CTh 8.7; cf. CJ 1.7.2), a *contagia polluerens* (CJ 7.3). Earlier laws against the circumcision of non-Jews focused now especially on the issue of Jewish masters owning Christian slaves and were frequently and shrilly reiterated; Judaizing and conversion to Judaism were vituperatively denounced (CTh 16.8.1,7; 16.8.19, in 409 CE; 16.9.5 in 423 CE). Newer laws excluded Jews from positions in the military, in government, and in legal professions. Construction of new synagogues was forbidden.²¹ Harsh rhetoric aside, Christian emperors in the fourth and fifth centuries for the most part continued and arguably even extended the policies of their pagan predecessors, granting to Jewish communities a significant degree of religious and social autonomy. Synagogues were protected from destruction, from appropriation by the military (troops were not to be quartered therein), and from unlawful seizure

(in such cases, Jewish communities were to be fairly compensated for their property), all on the well-established principle—and in increasing contrast to non-catholic Christians and to pagan traditionalists—that *Iudaeorum secta nulla lege prohibita* (CTh 16.8.9).²² In striking contrast to what would later be the case, Jews who had converted to Christianity out of convenience (or “out of various necessities”) rather than conviction were allowed to return *ad legem propriam* (CTh 16.8.23, issued in 416).²³

Why did “secular” law come to incubate rhetoric *adversus Iudaeos*? Part of the answer lies in the culture’s deeply traditional beliefs about the relation between heaven and earth. Their robust survival belied the shift from a pagan to a Christian cosmos. For Christian rulers no less than for their pagan predecessors, the hope of averting heaven’s wrath and of soliciting divine goodwill depended upon the careful maintenance of the “pact” between heaven and earth, the *pax deorum* or (after 312) the *pax dei*. The Christian god, distilled from readings of the Old and New Testaments, sternly disapproved of the traditions and practices of outsiders (“idol worship” in both testaments, now interpreted as the full range of Graeco-Roman traditional cults) and of diversity in his own community (now expressed as heresy and schism). In light of the traditions *adversus Iudaeos*, he also objected profoundly to Jews and Judaism. The Christian ruler, for the safety of the state, had to frame his actions and edicts accordingly.²⁴

Church canons censored social and religious mingling; imperial law lashed out at religious minorities, not just against Jews. To what effect? Our evidence suggests the usual gaps between repressive rhetoric and social reality. Emperors who condemned paganism also depended upon a civil service and a military whose ranks, even at the highest levels, continued to be filled by pagans (and, eventually, by “heretic” Goths, who were Arians). Communities of heretics continued to be found in Roman cities, their members impressed into curial duties. The ideology and the rhetoric of orthodoxy notwithstanding, pagans and heretics were a fact of life. (Ambrose, the catholic bishop of Milan, graciously received the new municipal rhetorician, Augustine the Manichee; *Confessions* 5.13, 23). Despite punishing legislation (the effect of which is difficult to gauge), the occasional wanton destruction of holy sites and sacred books, and physical intimidation, minority communities remained.²⁵ The triumphal narratives of the ecclesiastical victors gloat over this destruction and also camouflage its limits.

What about Jews in this transitional period? What happens to them between Constantine’s conversion in the early fourth century and the dissolution of the western empire in the course of the fifth? Our evidence pulls in different directions. For example:

- In Antioch in the mid-380s, so many of the Christians in John Chrysostom's church regularly frequented the feasts and fasts of their Jewish neighbors that John dedicated an extraordinary series of sermons against them—to what avail, we do not know. In the same decade, Christians in Callinicum on the Euphrates, spurred on by their bishop, burned down a local synagogue. Emperor Theodosius I ordered the bishop to pay damages to the Jews. Later, importuned by Ambrose of Milan, the emperor countermanded his own order. But in 393, in his own name and in those of his sons, Arcadius and Honorius, Theodosius affirmed that “no law prohibits the Jewish sect.” Persons despoiling synagogues broke the law and were to be repressed “with due severity” (*CTh* 16.8.9).
- Two donor inscriptions on a pillar in Aphrodisias in modern Turkey memorialize two communal projects effected by the combined efforts of local Jews, proselytes to Judaism, and gentile god-fearers (whether pagans or Christians, we cannot say). One face of the pillar dates from the fourth century; the other—even more remarkably—dates from the fifth century.²⁶ Conversion to Judaism as well as Christians' affiliating through “god-fearing” were both in violation of imperial law by this time. In essence, the inscription publicly proclaims illegal acts.
- During the 360s, by imperial order, the position of *defensor civitatis* (protector of the city) had been created to expedite local legal cases and to guarantee some measure of the courts' justice to the poor. In 409, the emperors added a further refinement: holders of such office, they decreed, had to be men “imbued with the sacred mysteries of orthodox religion,” that is, catholic Christians (*CJ* 1.55.8). In the decade between this last decree and religious violence on Minorca (see below), the position of *defensor*, by collective assent of the local council together with the approval of the bishop, had been held by that island's preeminent citizen, Theodorus. His kinsman Caecilianus served as *defensor* in 417/418 CE. Both men, until events overtook them, had also held high office in their synagogue. In other words, both of these “defenders”—the chief Roman magistrates of their community—who held office well after the law of 409 were themselves Jews.
- Beginning in the 390s, the imperial government repeatedly condemned and outlawed Christian violence against Jewish persons and property, whether it be through coerced conversions or through the destruction or appropriation of synagogues.²⁷ In 418 CE, however, the arrival of the relics of Saint Stephen precipitated a crisis on the island of Minorca. Christians

from one of the island's two towns, led by their bishop, Severus, marched on the Jews of the island's other town. They took over the synagogue and destroyed it, forcing the island's 540 Jews to become Christians. Bishop Severus's action against Minorca's Jewish community was unquestionably illegal. But Severus took great pains to broadcast his deed as widely as possible. He composed and circulated an encyclical letter about the affair, closing by urging his fellow bishops to "take up Christ's zeal against the Jews . . . for the sake of their eternal salvation." Severus hoped that his initiative would serve as the "spark" by which "the whole earth might be ablaze with the flame of love" to burn down the Jewish "forest of unbelief" (*Letter of Severus* 30.2, 31.2–4).²⁸

- Sometime thereafter, Augustine received a copy of Severus's epistle from Consentius, a man of letters who had ghostwritten the account of this attack. Consentius referred to the forced conversion of Minorca's Jews and the destruction of their synagogue as "certain marvelous events [that] took place among us by the command of the Lord" (*ep.* *12.13). Of Augustine's reply, we have no record. We do know, however, that in those writings of his composed after this date (ca. 418) (most importantly, the final books of *City of God*), Augustine repeated that same unique teaching that he had first formulated ca. 400 in his refutation of Latin Manichaeism, *contra Faustum*. The Jews' ancestral law had been given to them by God the father as a blessing, he wrote there; the Jews' practice of Judaism was the divinely given "mark of Cain" that protected them from religious harassment, be it from pagan monarchs or from Christian; God wanted the Jews, urged Augustine, to live *as* Jews, unmolested by coercion, until the End of the Age (Augustine, *c. Faust.* 12–13).

What generalizations about social relations between Christians and Jews can we draw from these inconsistent data? Were the fourth and fifth centuries the best of times or the worst of times? Both, I think. Conditions varied depending on the locale and on the temperament of the particular bishop. Where there was violence, there was most often a bishop directing its flow.²⁹ We know of some dozen episodes throughout the empire in these years when Christian mobs either destroyed or appropriated synagogue buildings.³⁰ Yet in this same period, throughout the empire, we have incontrovertible evidence of close and friendly Christian-Jewish relations. Church councils constantly (futilely?) reiterated their interdictions against the Christian laity's and even the clergy's consorting in any way with Jews. Imperial legislation, meanwhile,

repeatedly safeguarded Jewish religious prerogatives even as it lavishly insulted this “nefarious” and “un-Roman” sect.³¹

The imperial legislation creates a *trompe l’oeil*. Gathered into grand compendia in the fifth century and again in the sixth, these individual fourth-century laws originated as secular *responsa* sent to particular imperial officers in various parts of the empire. The laws themselves do not represent widespread initiatives universally applied (as, indeed, Severus’s insouciance suggests). How were these laws enforced? Were they enforced? We lack the evidence to answer with any confidence. The emperors’ hostile language, furthermore—their own iteration of the church’s *contra Iudaeos* tradition—often masks the actual balance of their laws, which attempt to impose restraint on all sides. In striking contrast to Christian Rome’s treatment of heretical Christians and of pagans, the emperors never outlawed Jewish practice, while they preserved many of the Jews’ ancient privileges. Anti-Jewish persecution doubtless occurred but not nearly on so universal and so violent a scale as the rhetoric of bishops and emperors might prompt us to imagine. We might speculate on the degree to which orthodoxy’s reliance on the Bible in both testaments, Old and New, created a safety zone for Jews that it pointedly denied to pagans (“idol worshipers”) and to heretics (“anti-Christ”). Whatever its sources, this safety zone clearly demonstrates its effects in our evidence: during the fourth and fifth centuries, Jews enjoyed a measure of security, acceptance, and respect that catholics vigorously denied to pagans and to various fellow Christians.³²

Though intra-Christian diversity fanned the polemical flames of rhetoric *adversus Iudaeos*, gentile foot traffic through the late Roman synagogue may have aggravated it. Informal, *ad hoc*, and varying degrees of pagan affiliation to and involvement in synagogue communities continued long into the Christian period.³³ Tertullian in third-century North Africa and Cyril in fifth-century Alexandria both comment bitterly on the inconsistency of those pagans who worshiped the god of Israel as well as their own deities (Tertullian, *ad Nationes* 1.13.3–4; Cyril, *On Worship in Spirit and Truth* 3.92.3). Commodian, a third-century (or, perhaps, fifth-century) North African Christian, criticized Jews for allowing pagans to behave in this way. And while Chrysostom complains acridly about gentile Christians in his church frequenting Jewish festivals, he never suggests that the synagogues are actually trying to convert these Christians to Judaism. Commodian chides Jews precisely because they do *not* push for converts, much less run missions to win them. “[The Jews] ought to tell you [a pagan] whether it is right to worship the gods” (*Instructiones* 1.37.10). The diaspora synagogue’s openness to receiving occasional outsiders

and the outsiders' continuing interest in dropping in, attested as well in Jewish inscriptions from Aphrodisias and Sardis, testify to a continuing religious fluidity in the late Roman world, one that neither episcopal nor imperial writings prepare us to see.³⁴ This fluidity, in turn, measures the gap between anti-Jewish rhetoric and social reality in the cities of the late empire.

* * *

Successive waves of barbarian invaders—Vandals, Goths, Sueves, Franks—battered the western empire from the early fifth century onward, accelerating the decline of (even notional) central power. For the next three hundred years, these groups fought one another and among themselves when they were not facing off with “Rome” (represented in this period by Byzantine incursions west).

After 456 CE, Visigothic conquerors established themselves as a ruling class in southern France and in central and eastern Spain. These newcomers' religious distinctiveness underscored their ethnic otherness: they were Arian Christians, whose customs, liturgical practices, and doctrines marked them off from the vastly more numerous catholic population over whom they now ruled.³⁵ Yet some things continued as before: in this post-Roman kingdom, as in the days of the empire, relations between heaven and earth were still the particular responsibility of Roman urban elites. Now, however, this mediating function devolved to a particular embodiment of that elite, the Hispano-Roman catholic bishop, who served as vital middleman to a new celestial patron, the municipality's saint.³⁶ The minority Arian Goths, meanwhile, maintained their own churches, directed by their own prelates.

The instability inherent in this situation was compounded by Visigothic patterns of leadership. Assassination or revolt almost invariably accompanied transfers of military and political power: the sort of turmoil that had marked imperial office in the mid-third century seemed endemic to Visigothic succession also. Meanwhile, as power pooled around local strongmen and as cities “with no ingrained tradition of subordination to a Gothic king” grew increasingly autonomous, the peninsula endured a long period of “incoherent warfare,” which ended only in the 570s, with the victories of Leovigild, the last Arian king of Visigothic Spain.³⁷

What about the *other* Hispano-Romans?³⁸ Visigothic rulers in their Arian phase seem mild in their speech about and actions toward Iberian Jews. When editing a digest of Roman laws for his subjects in 506, Alaric II distilled ten laws concerning the Jews from the fifty-three contained in the fourth- and fifth-century compendium of Theodosius II. As with its late imperial model, so also with Alaric's *Breviary*: the aim of these laws was to ensure that Jews

could not find themselves in positions of power over Christians, whether as masters to slaves, as husbands to wives, or as magistrates to plaintiffs.³⁹ No law interfered with traditional observances internal to the community.

In 587 CE, however, a year or so after the death of Leovigild, his father, the new king, Reccared, converted to Catholicism. Arian prelates followed suit in 589, Reccared's new religious alliance benefited both crown and church: Hispano-Roman episcopal prestige might steady the royal regime, while access to royal power might reinforce ecclesiastical initiatives.⁴⁰ Reccared's conversion marks the beginning of a period of long and perfervid cooperation between catholic monarchs and bishops: the eighteen councils held in Toledo between 589 and 702 ratify legislation that obscures any distinction between secular and canon law, marked as it was by the fierce resolve of kings and prelates to establish the realm as a unified catholic kingdom. Jewish subjects could only frustrate this goal.

In earlier Christian imperial law, the first targets of the government's coercive initiatives had been Christian minorities (both heretics and schismatics)⁴¹ and next, pagans. At best a distant third target population, Jews for the most part had been protected, their ancient religious prerogatives acknowledged. The example of the fourth- and fifth-century church in North Africa, illustrative of these priorities, is revealing when compared with what later occurs in Spain. It was the schismatic Donatists who bore the brunt of the coercive power of state and church acting in concert. Pagans came next (as with Honorius's initiative in 399 CE, shutting down temples in Carthage). Jews were unmolested; and Saint Stephen's relics, which had caused such chaos on Minorca, stimulated no such popular anti-Jewish activity in North Africa.⁴² The distraction of the Donatist situation had probably worked for the benefit of local Jewish populations: the catholic church had so much on its hands in finessing the integration of multitudes of Donatist Christians that the Jews, a much smaller population, stood well below the line of fire.

Fourth-century Christian imperial law, its relatively benign intent notwithstanding, readily availed itself of traditions of negative rhetoric regarding Jews. The imperial church continued to inspire and even to amplify this rhetoric. In a famous series of sermons given in Antioch in 387, Chrysostom charged that Jews were diseased; they were ravenous wolves; they were drunkards and whoremasters; they were agents of the devil. No image or insult was too low to use when caricaturing local Jews.⁴³ But even though church and state both indulged in such rhetoric, its social consequences seem slight. And the government had little patience for preaching *adversus Iudaeos* when it spilled over, as in Callinicum, to the Christian street.

Chrysostom's younger contemporary, Augustine, represents a unique exception to these traditions of anti-Jewish teaching. Unlike other church fathers, he insisted that the Jewish understanding and practice of Scripture, whether before or after the Temple's destruction, was exactly as God had intended. Jesus himself had lived as a traditionally observant Jew; so had the disciples and even Paul, for the entire period of their mission to the gentiles. And God wished the Jews to live this way even still, enacting the prophecies of blindness and of exile that stood in the Scriptures that they shared with the church, to whose truth and triumph they thereby, and unwittingly, witnessed.⁴⁴ More radically, he taught that the Jews' "fleshly" practice of Judaism instantiated positively in history cardinal points of catholic doctrine: that God is the author of flesh; that in Christ, he was born in flesh; and that at history's end, he would redeem the flesh in the resurrection of the *communio sanctorum*. More radically yet, from a political point of view, Augustine asserted that the Jews still stood under the active protection of God, and thus that any monarch, pagan or Christian, who tried to prevent the Jewish practice of Judaism—"to kill Jews," in the language of Augustine's metaphor—would bring upon himself the same sevenfold curse by which God had protected—Cain (Gen 4.14; *c. Faust.* 12.13). This idea of not "killing" Jews—that is, of not forcing Jews to convert—eventually reappears at a climactic point in Augustine's discussion of Israel in *City of God* 18.46. There Augustine makes his point by invoking not Genesis 4 but Ps 59.12: "Slay them not, lest my people forget. Scatter them with your might."⁴⁵

It is one of the ironies of our evidence that, where Augustine's theology seems most clearly to renounce violence ("slay them not"), he does not have actual violence in view at all. Religiously inspired aggression against Jews was not part of North African culture in his lifetime: no one there was "killing" Jews, that is, forcing them to convert. And while Augustine's enthusiasm for government censure of traditional cult is undisguised, it is also reactive: he condones but does not initiate.⁴⁶ The one place where Augustine does advocate coercion—con brio, at that—he has in view that community most like his own: the Donatist church. With conviction and originality, he fends off Donatist charges about the unseemliness of Christians' use of imperial force against fellow Christians, while building a creative case for the appropriateness, pastorally and theologically, of such action.⁴⁷

But in Spain after Reccared and continuing through the seventh century, Augustine's theology of coercion jumps rails, affecting Jews—precisely the population that he had explicitly defended. How and why did this happen? One part

of the answer lies with Bishop Isidore of Seville, a contemporary of King Sisebut (r. 612–621 CE) and a major conduit of Augustine's theological legacy to the Middle Ages. Isidore was intimately familiar with Augustine's writings, which he appropriated freely for his own. Most importantly, he read and borrowed from Augustine's work against Faustus, that treatise where Augustine had expressed most fully his defense of Jews and Judaism. Isidore even cites the same passage from *c. Faust.* 12.12, where Augustine taught that God curses any king, pagan, or Christian who tries to coerce Jews to abandon their religious practices.⁴⁸ Yet even if Isidore had understood Augustine's teaching, he ignored it, and he never invokes Augustine to criticize Sisebut's policy of forced conversion. Instead, in support of forced conversion, Isidore marshals precisely the pro-coercion arguments that Augustine had originally framed against the Donatists.⁴⁹

On the topic of the Jews, in brief, Isidore's Augustinianism is selective. When eventually he criticizes Sisebut's action, his censure is extremely mild, and years after the fact, when Sisebut is safely dead: Sisebut's initiative, he will say then, "was not wise."⁵⁰ Elsewhere he invokes Augustine's "witness doctrine" minimally, nowhere quoting Ps 59.12 in his major work *De fide catholica contra Iudaeos*, a treatise that circulated widely in the later Middle Ages.⁵¹ It was an unfortunate omission, as one historian has noted: "Isidore's failure to give the Augustinian notion of Jewish witness greater prominence in his writings led to the situation that a very important element of patristic tradition . . . received very little attention precisely in a period when [Jewish] existence came under severe attack for the first time in European history."⁵²

The hallmark of Visigothic legislation, both secular and ecclesiastical, became the ratification of anti-Jewish laws that one historian has characterized as "savage," "dreadful," and "frenzied."⁵³ Kings and bishops strove through such legislation to establish a uniformly catholic kingdom. As a result, they also reinterpreted the ancient synonymy of ethnicity and religion. After Toledo III (589 CE), the new convergence of *regnum* and *ecclesia* refracted this ancient idea in new ways. Visigoths assumed that form of Christianity most identified with Hispano-Romans, while the Hispano-Romans assumed a new ethnic identity, and both together claimed historical roots in Spanish soil: the new (or renewed) Iberian kingdom would thenceforth be supported by "the three pillars of *gens*, *rex*, and *patria Gothorum*." Jews could be naturalized as catholic Goths through conversion (the "inclusive" option), or isolated and treated as pariah (the "exclusive" option).⁵⁴

The totality of these laws in the canons of the later councils makes for grim reading. Sisebut's statute of 616 ordering the conversion of all Jews in

his kingdom is no longer extant,⁵⁵ though its trail of legal consequences is: Visigothic law both ecclesiastical and royal thereafter deals almost obsessively with cases of converted Jews who resumed the practice of Judaism or who continued to socialize with unconverted Jews. Inconsistencies in royal policy only compounded the problem: the aggressive Sisebut was succeeded by the mild Swinthila (r. 621–631), who did not pursue Sisebut's policies and who allowed forcibly converted Jews to return to Judaism; his successor Sisinanth (r. 631–636) renounced forced conversions but ordered lapsed baptized Jews to return to the church. Policy zigzagged right up until the Arab invasion of 711.⁵⁶ In striking contrast to the plasticity of "Gothic" identity, Jewish ethnicity came to seem ineradicable: Jews who converted were designated in council canons as *baptizati Iudaei* or simply as *Iudaei*, never as *Christiani*⁵⁷ and, thus, never as "Goths." The children of *relapsi* Jewish parents were to be taken from them and raised by Christians; Jews converted by force, if they had already received sacraments, had to continue as Christians nonetheless (this in striking contrast to *CTh* 16.8.23). Eventually, Jews who were never converted at all still had to renounce their practices. Jews caught observing Passover were to be lashed, scalped (*decalvatio*; perhaps less brutal head-shaving is intended), and deprived of all their property; male Jews who circumcised their sons were to be castrated, females to have their noses lopped off.⁵⁸ Finally, in 694, Toledo XVII canon 8 summarily ordered that the entire Jewish population be enslaved.

Law, dreadful or otherwise, is prescriptive, not descriptive. As we have already seen in the case of earlier Roman legislation, we cannot move directly from the language of law to the actual social behavior of its subjects. Our evidence from the late Roman period is very rich and provides us with critical traction up the slopes of Theodosian rhetoric. Inscriptions, variegated literary sources, archaeological remains: the whole panoply gives us a sense of late antique social life by which to assess the effects of law. For the Visigothic period, by comparison, we have very little other than the record of these anti-Jewish measures. We do not even know how (and, in some instances, whether) these measures were implemented. Thus, while we can readily appreciate the ways that these resolutions worked to construct catholic Gothic identity and community, we have no way to move out from the study of this legal discourse to the study of social history. We cannot gauge from its toxic rhetoric the degree to which this legislation actually shaped the lived experience of Visigothic Jews.⁵⁹

The laws, by framing penalties against catholics (bishops, priests, and

laymen) for protecting Jews or for accepting “gifts” (bribes?) from them, suggest that they met with at least occasional resistance.⁶⁰ Priests and other clerics sold Christian slaves to Jews (censured in Toledo X, canon 7, in 656 CE), thereby undermining their own church’s efforts to ensure that no Christian ever labored under the Jews’ “deadly dominion.”⁶¹ Converted Jews, this legislation reveals, held public office, testified in Christian courts, married Christians, owned Christian slaves, and had active relationships with clerics and laypeople.⁶² Was their profession of Christianity *bona fide*? The clerics could not know, and the possibility of false confession haunted them.⁶³ Was non-compliance on the part of various Catholics and Jews widespread? Frequent? Occasional? Rare?⁶⁴ The laws cannot of themselves reveal an answer.

Historians, in consequence, have produced enormously differing reconstructions. Some hold that the Iberian Jewish community was “rich, large, and influential,” that the true source of Christian anti-Jewish legislation was the church, not the crown, and that Spain’s Jewish community represented a “formidable political faction” that, because of its favor with the general populace, was never persecuted to great effect.⁶⁵ Others see in the Visigothic anti-Jewish laws a “sustained, systematic, and nation-wide policy of extermination.”⁶⁶ And others, pointing to the absolute lack of contemporary Jewish evidence and to “the invisibility of the Visigothic persecutions in collective Jewish memory” after 711, surmise that the persecutions were effective, that Jewish identity eroded and eventually disappeared under their constant onslaught, and that their success can be assumed, if not proved.⁶⁷ Absent evidence, reconstructions abound.

If we cannot trace with any security the ways that the Visigoths’ rhetoric *contra Iudaeos* affected the lives of Jewish contemporaries, we can at least identify various social factors at play in the sixth and seventh centuries that probably contributed to the singular intensification of this rhetoric. The most fundamental was the changed political landscape in the wake of the invasions, and the consequent confused lurching from empire to kingdom. All the post-Roman successor states “were born in violence.”⁶⁸ Preparedness *for* violence, whether giving or getting, marked all their societies. Formerly civilian landowning elites became militarized, and garrison troops gave way to citizen militias: both trends expressed and accelerated the decentralization of power. In these fractured societies, kings often had as much to worry about from their own nobles or cities as they did from foreign powers.

This condition of weakened central power that characterized the western kingdoms particularly characterized the Visigothic monarchy, where, from 531

CE onward, the crown rarely rested in the same family for two generations.⁶⁹ Reccared's decision to convert in 587, and to bring the Visigothic church and populace along with him two years later, can most readily be understood as his effort to augment, and thus stabilize, his own authority with that of the Hispano-Roman church. The catholic clergy, their Arian competition after 589 now folded into their own ranks, were doubtless gratified to have the king's energetic support. Their intimate cooperation failed to stabilize the transfer of power, however: Reccared's own son and heir was murdered within eighteen months of Reccared's death. In the 122 years of the catholic monarchy, from 589 to 711, eighteen kings, from fifteen different families, came and went, seven by violence.⁷⁰ True, the numbers are better for these sixth- and seventh-century monarchs than for the twenty-four emperors who within fifty years churned through Rome's third-century crisis; but the comparison is false. In the Roman case, while military strongmen inflicted a half-century of de facto civil war, the machinery of central government continued to run: cities collected taxes, which paid for the empire's "professional" army; the infrastructure of roads and water supply remained intact, supporting sizable civilian municipalities; commerce across vast distances continued. All this is gone in the post-Roman west.⁷¹

What remains dismally stable in this traumatic transition from empire is, alas, ecclesiastical rhetoric *adversus Iudaeos*. Sermons, commentaries, and theological treatises all functioned as the older pagan curriculum once did, inculcating these tropes in future generations of public "rhetors." The church was to the medieval period what the schools had been in the days of empire: a stable and trans-local institution for the transmission and teaching of agonistic rhetoric. Within the contracted horizons of the Visigothic kingdom, however, Arians and other heretics dropped away as targets of anti-Jewish insults, while the disappearance of a pagan challenge to the church's claims—which had, in part, motivated Augustine's positive teachings on Judaism—eliminated the need for "pro-Jewish" apologetic.⁷² Once church and state are joined after 589, their common enemy becomes configured precisely as the "perfidious Jew," now imagined as a threat to political unity as well as to religious orthopraxy and orthodoxy, because political and religious authority are so intimately identified.⁷³ Spikes in anti-Jewish legislation seem to coincide with moments of particular political turmoil.⁷⁴

By the High and later Middle Ages, European Jews would become the victims of searing religiously motivated violence, legitimated by the tremendous moral prestige of the church. The Visigothic experience as preserved and

passed on in Visigothic anti-Jewish texts prepared the way.⁷⁵ It is in the crucible of post-Arian Visigothic politics that the “hermeneutical Jew” of earlier patristic biblical interpretation and the “rhetorical Jew” of earlier patristic polemic and secular law become joined enduringly to the “political Jew,” contemporary and perfidious, whose existence insults and endangers both state and church, and who accordingly becomes the privileged locus for the coercive consensus represented by Visigothic law. In the two centuries that stand between Augustine (d. 430) and Sisebut (d. 621), the Jews’ legal status—we cannot assess their social status—had altered more drastically than it had in the full sweep of the seven centuries that stand between Alexander the Great and Augustine. In this sense, at least, Christian rhetoric *contra Iudaeos* had real effects.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. GenR 63.9, 10; 65.20; and Mireille Hadas-Lebel, "Jacob et Esaü ou Israël et Rome dans le Talmud et le Midrash," *RHR* 201.4 (1984): 369–92.
2. For a survey of the relevant Jewish sources, see Mireille Hadas-Lebel, *Jerusalem against Rome*, trans. R. Fréchet (Leuven, 2006). On Revelation in its Jewish and Roman contexts—and as a nexus for scholarship on the Romanness of Christian anti-Roman literature, see John Marshall, *Parables of War: Reading John's Jewish Apocalypse* (Waterloo, Ont., 2001); and Steven J. Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John: Reading Revelation in the Ruins* (New York, 2001).
3. So, most famously, in bGit 56a–b; cf. ARN-A 4; ARN-B 6; LamR 1.5; *Midrash Mishle* 15; Jeffrey Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture* (Baltimore, 1999), 139–75; Galit Hasan-Rokem, *Web of Life: Folklore and Midrash in Rabbinic Literature*, trans. B. Stein (Stanford, Calif., 2000), 171–89; and Daniel Boyarin, "A Tale of Two Synods: Nicaea, Yavneh, and Rabbinic Ecclesiology," *Exemplaria* 12.1 (2000): 21–62.
4. The ambivalent Romanness of Jews and Judaism in the Roman Empire is perhaps clearest in the case of the Jewish messianic movement that became Christianity. See further Chris Frilingos, "Early Christianity and the Discourse of Empire in the First Three Centuries CE," *Religion Compass* 4.3 (2010): 144–56; Laura Nasrallah, *Christian Responses to Roman Art and Architecture: The Second-Century Church amid the Spaces of Empire* (Cambridge, 2010); and Jeremy Schott, *Christianity, Empire, and the Making of Religion in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia, 2008).
5. See Seth Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society? Reciprocity and Solidarity in Ancient Judaism* (Princeton, N.J., 2009). Cf. John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (312 BCE–117 CE)* (Edinburgh, 1996); Daniel R. Schwartz, "How at Home Were the Jews of the Hellenistic Diaspora?," *CP* 95.3 (2000): 349–57; and Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge, Mass., 2002).
6. Discussion of the specificity of the Roman context here and throughout presumes the significance of Persia as well. See further Elman, "Babylonian Jews at the Intersection of the Iranian Economy and Sasanian Law," in *The Oxford Handbook of Judaism and Economics*, ed. A. Levine (New York, 2010), 545–63; Elman, "Marriage and Marital Property in Rabbinic and Sasanian Law," in *Rabbinic Law in Its Roman and Near Eastern Context*, ed. C. Hezser (Tübingen, 2003), 227–76; Elman, "Middle Persian Culture and Babylonian Sages: Accommodation and Resistance in the Shaping of Rabbinic Legal Tradition," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, ed. C. E. Fonrobert and M. S. Jaffee (Cambridge, 2007), 165–97; Carol Bakhos and M. Rahim Shayegan,

eds., *The Talmud in Its Iranian Context* (Tübingen, 2010); and Shai Secunda, “Reading the Bavli in Iran,” *JQR* 100.2 (2010): 310–42. On the broader context, see Matthew P. Canepa, *The Two Eyes of the Earth: Art and Ritual of Kingship between Rome and Sasanian Iran* (Berkeley, Calif., 2009).

7. See Lapin and Levinson, in this volume.

8. This trend had been more fully felt in the study of late antique Christianity—e.g., Elizabeth Clark, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004), but it has prominent proponents, such as Daniel Boyarin, in the study of late antique Judaism as well—e.g., *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia, 2004). For an example of the value of combining such perspectives with postcolonial theory, see also Andrew S. Jacobs, *Remains of the Jews: The Holy Land and Christian Empire in Late Antiquity* (Stanford, Calif., 2004).

9. On these paradigm shifts, see Annette Yoshiko Reed and Adam H. Becker, “Introduction: Traditional Models and New Directions,” in *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Becker and Reed (Tübingen, 2003), 1–32. On their limits, see Megan Hale Williams, “No More Clever Titles: Observations on Some Recent Studies of Jewish-Christian Relations in the Roman World,” *JQR* 99.1 (2009): 37–55; and James Carleton Paget, *Jews, Christians, and Jewish Christians in Antiquity* (Tübingen, 2010), 3–22.

10. On the problems with “influence” as an analytical tool, see Peter Schäfer, introduction to *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture I* (Tübingen, 1998), 14–15; Schäfer, *Mirror of His Beauty: Feminine Images of God from the Bible to the Early Kabbalah* (Princeton, N.J. 2002), 229–34; and David N. Myers, *Resisting History: Historicism and Its Discontents in German-Jewish Thought* (Princeton, N.J., 2003), 163–70.

11. Eduard Iricinschi and Holger Zellentin, “Making Selves and Marking Others: Identity and Late Antique Heresiologies,” in *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity*, ed. Iricinschi and Zellentin (Tübingen, 2008), 1–27; and Erich S. Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity* (Princeton, N.J., 2011).

12. In this volume, see Cotton, Lapin, and Dohrmann on legal documents and rabbinic halakhah; Levinson and Boustán on midrash; Swartz and Münz-Manor on liturgical poetry; and Talgam on art and architecture.

13. In this volume, see Adler and Berkowitz on third-century Christians; and Sivan and Irshai on bishops and biographers of the fourth and fifth centuries.

14. Arnaldo Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom: The Limits of Hellenization* (Cambridge, 1975), 38: “Neither Polybius nor Posidonius realized what superiority the Roman leaders acquired by the mere fact of being able to speak Greek . . . while the Greek leaders needed interpreters to understand Latin. Even in purely political terms it never seems to have occurred to Polybius and Posidonius that the command of a foreign language meant power to the Romans.”

15. If Roman knowledge is comparably invisible, it is perhaps partly because of the positioning of Rome as arbiter of universal knowledge through practices such as encyclopedism. See Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh, eds., *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge, 2007).

16. This is standard among classical historians but less so among Jewish historians. See Susan Alcock, *Graecia Capta: The Landscapes of Roman Greece* (Cambridge, 1993); Alcock, ed., *The Early Roman Empire in the East* (Oxford, 1997); Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley, Calif., 2000); Erich S. Gruen, *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1992); and Gruen, *Studies in Greek Culture and Roman Policy* (Leiden, 1990).

17. Valerius Maximus 2.2.2, cited after Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, “To Be Roman, Go Greek: Thoughts on Hellenization at Rome,” *BICS* 42.S71 (1998): 79–91.

18. See also Greg Woolf, “Becoming Roman, Staying Greek: Cultural Identity and the Civilizing

Process in the Roman East,” *PCPhS* 40 (1994): 116–43; Timothy Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitation* (Oxford, 2001); and Simon Goldhill, ed., *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire* (Cambridge, 2001).

19. On the lineage of modern scholarship on Hellenism and Judaism, see Arnaldo Momigliano, “Prologue in Germany (Untitled),” in *Nono Contributo all’ storia degli studi classici e dei mondo antico*, ed. R. Di Donato (Rome, 1992), 556–59. See also Martha Himmelfarb, “Elias Bickerman on Judaism and Hellenism,” in *The Jewish Past Revisited: Reflections on Modern Jewish Historians*, ed. D. Myers and D. Ruderman (New Haven, Conn., 1998), 199–211; and Albert Baumgarten, *Elias Bickerman as a Historian of the Jews: A Twentieth-Century Tale* (Tübingen, 2010).

20. See Dale B. Martin, “Paul and the Judaism/Hellenism Dichotomy: Toward a Social History of the Question,” in *Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide*, ed. T. Engberg-Pedersen (Louisville, Ky., 2001), 29–62. On competing taxonomies, see Annette Yoshiko Reed, “Parting Ways over Blood and Water? Beyond ‘Judaism’ and ‘Christianity’ in the Roman Near East,” in *La croisée des chemins revisitée*, ed. S. C. Mimouni and B. Pouderon (Paris-Cerf, 2012), 277–59.

21. Tessa Rajak, “Greeks and Barbarians in Josephus,” in *Hellenism in the Land of Israel*, ed. J. J. Collins and G. E. Sterling (Notre Dame, Ind., 2001), 244–62; cf. John Barclay, “The Empire Writes Back: Josephan Rhetoric in Flavian Rome,” in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome*, ed. Edmondson et al. (Oxford, 2005), 315–32.

22. Oskar Skarsaune, “Judaism and Hellenism in Justin Martyr, Elucidated from His Portrait of Socrates,” in *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag*, vol. 3: *Frühes Christentum*, ed. H. Cancik, H. Lichtenberger, and P. Schäfer (Tübingen, 1996), 585–611.

23. See further Jaroslav Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture* (New Haven, Conn., 1993); and Guy Stroumsa, *Barbarian Philosophy: The Religious Revolution of Early Christianity* (Tübingen, 1999).

24. I.e., even as Tertullian appears to be continuing a discussion raised by Paul, Justin, and other Christian writers before him, he departs from them precisely in adopting Latin as the language of Christian theology. The quotation is taken from Bowersock’s review of Martin Goodman’s *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations* (London, 2007), in *London Review of Books* 29.4 (2007): 16. On Roman imperialism and the Latin language considered in relation to Roman Palestine, see Werner Eck, *Rom und Judaea: Fünf Vorträge zur römischen Herrschaft in Palaestina* (Tübingen, 2007), 157–200.

25. Brent D. Shaw, “Josephus: Roman Power and Responses to It,” *Athenaeum* 83.2 (1995): 357–90; and Michael Peachin, *Iudex vice Caesaris: Deputy Emperors and the Administration of Justice during the Principate* (Stuttgart, 1996).

26. So Shaw, “Josephus.”

27. See further Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*; and Peter Schäfer, ed., *The Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Second Jewish Revolt against Rome* (Tübingen, 2003).

28. Our focus on Rome does not deny the pervasiveness of Hellenism as much as point to the comparable scholarly neglect of Romanness. Indeed, one can approach Hellenism as a complex of “language, thought, mythology, and images that constituted an extraordinarily flexible medium . . . not necessarily antithetical to local and indigenous traditions”; Glen Bowersock, *Hellenism in Late Antiquity* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1990), 7.

29. Arthur Droge, *Homer or Moses?* (Tübingen, 1989).

30. Examples pertaining to late antique Judaism include David Stern, “The Captive Woman: Hellenization, Greco-Roman Erotic Narrative, and Rabbinic Literature,” *Poetics Today* 19.1 (1998): 91–127; Martin S. Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Tradition in Palestinian Judaism, 200*

BCE–400 CE (Oxford, 2001); Azzan Yadin, “Rabban Gamliel, Aphrodite’s Bath, and the Question of Pagan Monotheism,” *JQR* 96.2 (2006): 149–79; and Yair Furstenberg, “The Agon with Moses and Homer: Rabbinic Midrash and the Second Sophistic,” in *Homer and the Bible in the Eyes of Ancient Interpreters*, ed. M. Niehoff (Leiden, 2012), 299–328. On late antique Christianity, see Susanna Elm, *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church: Emperor Julian, Gregory of Nazianzus, and the Vision of Rome* (Berkeley, Calif., 2012).

31. That the issues here discussed look quite different from the perspective of scholars well versed in the documentary data is clear from Eck, *Rom und Judaea*, pointing also to the value of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaea-Palaestinae* project for enriching our sense of the relevant cultural and imperial dynamics. See Cotton, in this volume.

32. In recent years, such concerns have been explored in conversation with the insights from postcolonial theory noted above. Credit, however, is ultimately due to the great classicists who did the comparative spadework linking Roman materials to rabbinic—including David Daube, Saul Lieberman, and Boaz Cohen.

33. Greg Woolf, “Beyond Romans and Natives,” *World Archaeology* 28.3 (1997): 341. Woolf emphasizes “the severe limitations imposed on the power of any ancient empire by pre-industrial technology and communications” (340).

34. *Ibid.*, 347.

35. David J. Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity: Experience in the Roman Empire* (Princeton, N.J., 2011), 36.

36. *Ibid.*

37. Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 BC–AD 337* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993); cf. Tessa Rajak, “Jews, Semites and Their Cultures in Fergus Millar’s *Roman Near East*” (2000), repr. in *The Jewish Dialogue with Greece and Rome: Studies in Cultural and Social Interaction* (Leiden, 2002), 503–10.

38. On Palestinian rabbis as Roman sub-elites, see Lapin, in this volume. Lapin’s *Rabbis and Romans: The Rabbinic Movement in Its Late-Antique Provincial Setting* (Oxford, 2012) is a landmark in this regard.

39. On Josephus and the Second Sophistic, see Maud W. Gleason, “Mutilated Messengers: Body Language in Josephus,” in *Being Greek under Rome*, ed. Goldhill, 50–85. For an initial exploration of the same dynamics as echoed in the rabbinic project, see Amram Tropper, *Wisdom, Politics, and Historiography: Tractate Avot in the Context of the Graeco-Roman Near East* (New York, 2004), with review by Nicholas de Lange in *JTS* 56.2 (2005): 633–38.

40. We stress the linkage between Romanization and Christianization. See, however, the important comparative analysis by Christopher Haas, “Mountain Constantines: The Christianization of Aksum and Iberia,” *JLA* 1.1 (2008): 101–26.

41. For the western Roman Empire, see Fredriksen and Sivan, in this volume; on the eastern Roman Empire, see Boustán, in this volume. For perspectives on Palestine that transect ages traditionally distinguished as “Roman” and “Byzantine,” see Cotton and Talgam, in this volume. That Byzantium may be a particularly rich setting for seeking evidence for Jewish engagement with Roman imperial culture has been suggested by Ra’anan S. Boustán, “The Spoils of the Jerusalem Temple at Rome and Constantinople: Jewish Counter-Geography in a Christianizing Empire,” in *Antiquity in Antiquity*, ed. G. Gardner and K. Osterloh (Tübingen, 2008), 327–72; and Alexei Sivertsev, *Judaism and Imperial Ideology in Late Antiquity* (New York, 2011). More research along these lines is facilitated by Robert Bonfil et al., eds., *Jews in Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures* (Leiden, 2012).

42. By contrast, Glen Bowersock, “The Greek Moses: Confusion of Ethnic and Cultural Components in Later Roman and Early Byzantine Palestine,” in *Religious and Ethnic Communities in Later*

Roman Palestine, ed. H. Lapin (Baltimore, 1998), 31–48, emphasizing the isolation of Byzantine Palestine from “late Roman” and “late antique” developments. But see Hagith Sivan, *Palestine in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2008), 4—with a review by Peter Brown in the *New York Review of Books*, June 11, 2009.

43. Schäfer, *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture I*; Schäfer and C. Hezser, eds., *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture II* (Tübingen, 2000); and Schäfer, ed., *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture III* (Tübingen, 2002). We also build on Seth Schwartz and Richard Kalmin, eds., *Jewish Culture and Society under the Christian Empire* (Leuven, 2002).

44. Schäfer, introduction to *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture I*, 16.

45. Note also, more recently, Lee I. Levine and Daniel R. Schwartz, eds., *Jewish Identities in Antiquity: Studies in Memory of Menahem Stern* (Tübingen, 2009), a volume that complements the present one; see there for discussions, e.g., on questions of Hellenism, the rabbis’ normativity, and the Galilee.

46. Laura Nasrallah, “Mapping the World: Justin, Tatian, Lucian, and the Second Sophistic,” *HTR* 98.3 (2005): 283–314; and Jeremy Schott, “Founding Platonopolis: The Platonic in Eusebius, Porphyry, and Iamblichus,” *J ECS* 11.4 (2003): 501–31.

47. Doron Bar, “Population, Settlement and Economy in Late Roman and Byzantine Palestine (70–641 AD),” *BSOAS* 67.3 (2004): 307–20, offers a rereading of evidence for settlement in Palestine in the late Roman period as due to a “broader political settlement drive that characterized the eastern parts of the Roman realm during the period.”

48. See Levinson, in this volume.

49. Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Berkeley, Calif., 1991), 121–22.

50. Clifford Ando, “Decline, Fall, and Transformation,” *JLA* 1.1 (2008): 33.

51. *Ibid.*, 36–37. Ando posits that “classicists and historians of religion long have conspired to divorce the Christian and the classical, to the detriment of both,” partly because the former “have desired to study, and so discovered, a world uncontaminated by Near Eastern and Semitic influences” (33).

52. In this regard, Cam Grey’s *Constructing Communities in the Late Roman Countryside* (Cambridge, 2011) is a model of the sort of integration of Jewish evidence into Classics that we hope this volume might further stimulate; see 105–11 for the use of evidence by and about Jews to illumine the social realities behind elite Christian rhetoric.

53. See further Walter Bauer, *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum*, rev. ed., G. Strecker (Tübingen, 1964), 135–49; Arthur J. Droge, “The Apologetic Dimensions of the Ecclesiastical History,” in *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism*, ed. H. W. Attridge and G. Hata (Leiden, 1992), 492–509; Sebastian Brock, “Eusebius and Syriac Christianity,” in *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism*, 212–34; Adam H. Becker, “Beyond the Spatial and Temporal Limes: Questioning the ‘Parting of the Ways’ Outside the Roman Empire,” in *Ways That Never Parted*, esp. 373–74; and Adler and Irshai, in this volume.

54. Clark, *History, Theory, Text*, 169. For our present topic, it is intriguing to note how much of what we know about Jews, Christians, and the Roman Empire we owe to the first-century Jewish historian of Vespasian and Titus, on the one hand, and the fourth-century Christian historian of Constantine, on the other.

55. In ancient and modern historiography, wars have long been cast as the very stuff of history—a Thucydidean bias that, as Arnaldo Momigliano noticed long ago, contributed to the systematic neglect of the more subtle cycles of human experience and cultural change; see his “The Herodotean and the Thucydidean Tradition,” in *Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Berkeley, Calif., 1992), 29–54.

56. This trope, in turn, echoes and inverts Immanuel Kant’s image of Judaism as an animated corpse and G. W. F. Hegel’s dismissal of the Jews as puzzlingly outliving Roman destruction after the

completion of their world-historical mission; cf. Hegel, “The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate,” repr. in *Early Theological Writings*, trans. T. M. Knox (Philadelphia, 1971); and Amy Newman, “The Death of Judaism in German Protestant Thought from Luther to Hegel,” *JAAR* 61.3 (1993): 455–84.

57. Most famously, Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study of the Relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire (AD 135–425)*, trans. H. McKeating (London, 1996). Cf. Albert I. Baumgarten, “Marcel Simon’s *Verus Israel* as a Contribution to Jewish History,” *HTR* 92.4 (1999): 465–78; and Jonathan Klawans, “Josephus, the Rabbis, and Responses to Catastrophes Ancient and Modern,” *JQR* 100.2 (2010): 278–309.

58. Given the selective slice of sources cited and engaged within studies of Jewish-Christian relations, the specialist in Jewish Studies might be forgiven for wrongly assuming that all Christian literature is polemical. See further Raʿanan S. Boustán and Annette Yoshiko Reed, “Blood and Atonement in the Pseudo-Clementines and *The Story of the Ten Martyrs*,” *Henoah* 30.2 (2008): 349–50.

59. Most prominently, the choice of subtitle for Goodman’s *Rome and Jerusalem*, i.e., *The Clash of Ancient Civilizations*. But see Seth Schwartz, “Sunt Lachrymae Rerum,” *JQR* 99.1 (2009): 56–64.

60. The value of a focus on conflict becomes clear, e.g., in Goodman’s *Rome and Jerusalem*, which takes the approach to its logical extremes in the treatment of post-70 Judaism in particular. Although his analysis of the causes of the first Jewish revolt focus on the accidental and downplay any sense of inevitability, and his comparison of Jewish and Roman cultures highlights commonality, Goodman frames the events of the entire period of 70–312 CE under the rubric of “reactions” to the Roman “war against Judaism.” He presents this war, moreover, as having caused a “legacy of prejudice” still not expunged today, “[n]early two thousand years after the Temple was destroyed, two hundred years after [Moses] Hess’ birth, and sixty years after the establishment of an independent Jewish state in Palestine” (584–85). Whereas Goodman’s large-scale focus on the aftermath of the Jewish revolt highlights certain elements in the experience of Jews under Roman rule, a more local focus on conflicts can be found in Sivan’s *Palestine in Late Antiquity* (esp. 7–13), particularly rich for its inclusion of Samaritans alongside Jews, Christians, and “pagans.” It should also be noted how contemporary concerns for religious violence, “culture wars,” and the “clash of civilization” have drawn fresh attention to the power of violent rhetoric to shape practice; important examples include Thomas Sizgorich, *Violence and Belief in Late Antiquity: Militant Devotion in Christianity and Islam* (Philadelphia, 2008); and Brent Shaw, *Sacred Violence: African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine* (Cambridge, 2011).

61. See Schott, *Christianity, Empire, and the Making of Religion*, esp. 3–5, on the dominance of such metaphors and their distorting effects. With respect to the “conscious efforts to Christianize the countryside of the late Roman world” and their associated building programs, Grey similarly stresses that “we should not imagine that the presence of Christian buildings automatically created Christians”; *Constructing Communities*, 110. See, however, David Frankfurter, “Where the Spirits Dwell: Possession, Christianization, and Saints’ Shrines in Late Antiquity,” *HTR* 103.1 (2010): 27–46.

62. I.e., from the vantage point of a modern world, shaped by the Christianization of the Roman Empire and its aftereffects in western Europe, where Judaism and Christianity can be classed as “religions.” On the anachronism, Daniel Boyarin, “Rethinking Jewish Christianity: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category (to Which Is Appended a Correction of My *Border Lines*),” *JQR* 99.1 (2009): 7–36.

63. See Fredriksen, Sivan, and Irshai, in this volume.

64. See Ando, “Decline, Fall, and Transformation,” 41, and references there, for the suggestion that “the persistence in varying degrees of Roman institutions, as also the habits and structures of Roman political thought, broadly construed, suggests that Roman power even in the late empire was more resilient and more diffuse, its sources of legitimacy more varied, and its stakeholders

more numerous than often is suspected" (41). On rural locales, see Grey, *Constructing Communities*; and Doron Bar, "The Christianization of Rural Palestine during Late Antiquity," *JEH* 54.3 (2003): 406–9.

65. Peter Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity, 1971–1997," *JECs* 6.3 (1998): 364–65, although see already Brown, *Authority and the Sacred: Aspects of the Christianisation of the Roman World* (Cambridge, 1995), 55–78. Read from this perspective, e.g., the rabbinic silence on Christianization need not be interpreted only as an expression of Jewish isolationism in denial of a suddenly and self-evidently Christian world; it may provide evidence for a neglected perspective from which the similarities between "pagan" and Christian Rome appeared more salient than the changes.

66. Fergus Millar, "Redrawing the Map," in Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East*, ed. H. M. Cotton and G. M. Rogers (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2006), 3:505–6.

67. *Ibid.*, 506.

68. Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200–1000* (2nd ed.; Oxford, 2003), 2.

69. *Ibid.*, 40.

70. Wider vistas of geography are beginning to be opened by art historians such as Matthew Canepa, who correlates Eurasian court cultures (e.g., "Distant Displays of Power: Understanding Cross-Cultural Interaction among the Elites of Rome, Sasanian Iran, and Sui-Tang China," in *Theorizing Cross-Cultural Interaction among the Ancient and Early Medieval Mediterranean, Near East and Asia* [Washington, D.C., 2010], 121–54), as well as by specialists in Syriac Christianity and Babylonian Judaism working to illumine the Iranian and other eastern settings in which so many late antique Jews and Christians lived (see above).

CHAPTER I

1. Esp. Gay L. Byron, *Symbolic Blackness and Ethnic Difference in Early Christian Literature* (London, 2002); Denise K. Buell, *Why This New Race? Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York, 2005); and Aaron P. Johnson, *Ethnicity and Argument in Eusebius' Praeparatio Evangelica* (New York, 2006).

2. See Marc Hirshman, *Torah for the Entire World* (Hebrew; Tel Aviv, 1999), 45–60 (for a shorter English version, "Rabbinic Universalism in the Second and Third Centuries," *HTR* 93.2 [2000]: 101–15); and Terence L. Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles: Jewish Patterns of Universalism (to 135 CE)* (Waco, Tex., 2007). A great deal of the discussion of Jewish universalism revolves around the term "God-fearers" and whether and how it refers to gentiles who affiliated in some way with Jewish communities. For a review of scholarship on the term, see Eric Miller, "The Rise and Metamorphosis of the God-Fearers: Their Place and Meaning in Jewish and Christian Writings, 200 B.C.E.–200 C.E." (Ph.D. diss., Jewish Theological Seminary, in progress).

3. James L. Kugel, *The Bible as It Was* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999).

4. Anders Runesson, "Particularistic Judaism and Universalistic Christianity? Some Critical Remarks on Terminology and Theology," *STh* 53 (1999): 55–75.

5. For a brief review of scholarship on H from Wellhausen on, see Christophe Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch: A Study in the Composition of the Book of Leviticus* (Tübingen, 2007), 4–11. On the characteristic features of H, see Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York, 2000), 1319–32.

6. The syntax of v. 5 is complicated. The relative clause (*asher ya'aseh otam ha-adam va-hai ba-hem*),

which uses third-person singular rather than the main clause's second-person plural (*u-shemartem et hukotai ve-et mishpatai*), has been subject to much interpretation. Most commentators, ancient and modern, follow Milgrom's tendency in the Anchor Bible to see in the clause a conditional meaning, understanding living to be a consequence of doing ("You shall heed my statutes and my rules, which if one does them, he shall live by them"), and not the tack taken by JPS, which sees the clause as emphatic and understands living and doing to be coterminous activities ("You shall keep my laws and my rules, by the pursuit of which a person shall live") in *The Jewish Bible, Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures* (Philadelphia, 1985). The Septuagint has the verb *ya'aseh* ("he will do") doing double time as a command to observe and a description of the reward that one receives for doing so: *kai phylaxesthe panta ta prostigmata mou kai panta ta krimata mou kai poiēsete auta ha poiēsas anthrōpos zēsetai en autois*. On the Septuagint for the verse, see John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Leviticus* (Atlanta, 1997), 274–75; and Paul Harlé and Didier Pralon, *La Bible d'Alexandrie: Le Lévitique* (Paris, 1988), 160.

7. Close literary analysis of this unit can be found in Baruch J. Schwartz, *The Holiness Legislation: Studies in the Priestly Code* (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1999), 145–54.

8. Milgrom translates God's self-declaration formula in v. 2 as "I am YHWH your God"; in v. 4 (where the Hebrew is the same) as "I YHWH your God"; and its abbreviated form in v. 5 as "I YHWH." Since the phrase is almost identical to God's self-declaration at the head of the Decalogue (Exod 20.2; Deut 5.6), its repetition here may imply that the laws of Leviticus 18 are equivalent in importance (see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1517–18).

9. On encyclical education in Philo, see F. H. Colson, "Philo on Education," *JTS* 18 (1916–17): 151–62; Monique Alexandre, "La culture profane chez Philon," in *Philon d'Alexandrie, Lyon 11–16 Septembre 1966*, ed. R. Arnaldez, C. Mondésert, and J. Pouilloux (Paris, 1967), 105–29; and Alan Mendelson, *Secular Education in Philo of Alexandria* (Cincinnati, 1982). See the treatment of this passage in Preston M. Sprinkle, *Law and Life: The Interpretation of Leviticus 18:5 in Early Judaism and in Paul* (Tübingen, 2008), 101–14, whose close work on some of the same texts I treat in this essay has been very helpful, though his work stops before the second century.

10. On Philo's theory of the development of the soul, see Jean Laporte, "The Ages of Life in Philo of Alexandria," *SBL Seminar Papers* 25 (1986): 278–90; and Mendelson, *Secular Education*, 40–42. On Philo's views on the development of children into adults, see Maren Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture* (Tübingen, 2001), 161–86.

11. On variations in Philo's citation of Lev 18.1–5 from the Septuagint, see Sprinkle, *Law and Life*, 105–6.

12. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, trans., *Philo Volume IV*, LCL (Cambridge, Mass., 2005 [1932]), 498–503.

13. On this and other passages in which Philo speaks of Egypt, see Sarah J. K. Pearce, *The Land of the Body: Studies in Philo's Representation of Egypt* (Tübingen, 2007).

14. Canaan plays a much less central role in Philo's symbolic vocabulary than Egypt (the fact of Philo living there is surely not unrelated). But see Katell Berthelot, "Philo of Alexandria and the Conquest of Canaan," *JSJ* 38.1 (2007): 39–56.

15. On the variations in Paul's quotation of Lev 18.5 from the Septuagint and between Galatians and Romans, especially regarding the inclusion of the word *anthrōpos* (the Septuagint and Romans have it; Philo and Galatians do not), see Sprinkle, *Law and Life*, 135–36. On Paul's interpretation of Lev 18.5 considered in the context of other ancient Jewish exegeses, see also Simon Gathercole, "Torah, Life and Salvation: Leviticus 18.5 in Early Judaism and the New Testament," in *From Prophecy to Testament: The Function of the Old Testament in the New*, ed. C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders (Peabody, Mass., 2004), 131–50.

16. For a thorough review of recent scholarship on Paul's interpretation of Lev 18.5, see Sprinkle, *Law and Life*, 6–14. One major question harks back to the ambiguity within the syntax of the verse itself, discussed above, regarding whether life (*va-hai ba-hem*) is contingent on observing the Law (one gains life by doing the commandments) or simply the medium through which one does (one should live in the habit of doing the commandments).

17. I borrow these characterizations from Andrew Hollis Wakefield, *Where to Live: The Hermeneutical Significance of Paul's Citations from Scripture in Galatians 3:1–14* (Leiden, 2003), 23–33. See also Stephen Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The "Lutheran" Paul and His Critics* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 2004).

18. On text-critical problems in Rom 10.5, see Sprinkle, *Law and Life*, 166, n. 2.

19. For broader discussion, see Everett Procter, *Christian Controversy in Alexandria: Clement's Polemic against the Basilideans and Valentinians* (Bern, 1995). On the literary form of the *Stromateis*, see the review of scholarship in Eric F. Osborn, *Clement of Alexandria* (Cambridge, 2005), 6–15.

20. Clement's description of the perfect Christian frequently uses the term "gnostic," sometimes with polemical intent against others who claim the term; on this passage, see Judith L. Kovacs, "Divine Pedagogy and the Gnostic Teacher according to Clement of Alexandria," *J ECS* 9.1 (2001): 4–5. On Clement's use of the term as a positive self-description, see David Brakke, *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual, and Diversity in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, Mass., 2010), 32–34.

21. Clement's quotation of the passage varies slightly from the Septuagint. Anniewies van den Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo in the Stromateis: An Early Christian Reshaping of a Jewish Model* (Leiden, 1988), 156, speculates that Clement is combining Philo with the Septuagint or is borrowing from the texts he had of Paul.

22. Clement quotes the verse with the word *anthrōpos*, like the Septuagint and Romans but unlike Philo and Galatians.

23. See *Strom.* 5.1.7.2, where Clement again refers to Eph 2.5 in the course of arguing for the importance of works; see John Behr, *Asceticism and Anthropology in Irenaeus and Clement* (New York, 2000).

24. Otto Stählin, ed., *Stromata Buch I–VI* (Leipzig, 1906), 137–38; translation modified from J. Ferguson, trans., *Stromateis Books 1–3* (Washington, D.C., 1991), 190–91.

25. Clement has a propensity for threes (a structuring principle that he associates with the Peripatetics in *Strom.* 2.34.1). Clement begins his *Paedagogue* with a set of three (1.1) and structures many of his other discussions that way (see *Strom.* 2.32.1; 2.50.1; 2.97.3; 2.101.3).

26. In *Strom.* 2.18 (drawing on Philo's *De Virtutibus*), Clement discusses a variety of laws from the major legal corpora of the Pentateuch, suggesting that Clement may be referring in this passage to a concrete observance of pentateuchal prescriptions. This is not to say that Clement does not sometimes explicitly allegorize pentateuchal law, including parts of Leviticus; in *Strom.* 5.6, Clement gives an alternately cosmological, Christological, and philosophical interpretation of the Tabernacle, its appurtenances, and the priestly vestments. Clement's approach to pentateuchal law is often assumed too quickly to be an allegorizing one, but see the sensitive treatments of Clement's relationship to the Old Testament and specifically to its law in James Carleton Paget, "Clement of Alexandria and the Jews," *SJT* 51.1 (1998): 86–97; and Carleton Paget, "The Christian Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Alexandrian Tradition," in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, vol. 1, part 1, ed. M. Sæbø, C. Brekelmans, and M. Haran (Göttingen, 1996), 478–542.

27. Van den Hoek calls this one of the "short sequences": chaps. 10 and 11 of the *Stromateis* book 2 draw on *De Congressu* 83–106 (*Clement of Alexandria*, 156).

28. Clement's *pelas* (see also 2.90.2, 5.81.2, 7.19.2, 7.41.6, 7.52.3, 7.69.1, 7.76.2, 7.92.5) is roughly

equivalent to biblical Hebrew's *re'a*, *ah*, or *'amit*, which the Septuagint usually translates as *plēson*. Its absence in Lampe's *Patristic Greek Lexicon* suggests that it is not a frequent patristic formulation.

29. Buell, *Why This New Race*, 9.

30. On the rhetoric of restoration, see *ibid.*, 70–74. On Christians as the third race, see *ibid.*, 139. See also David Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley, Calif., 1992), 223.

31. The juxtaposition model does not seem particularly prominent among early Christian writers. Buell points to three models, e.g., among which Justin Martyr vacillates: 1) Christians are the Israelite *genos* or *ethnos*; 2) Christians are a second, superior Israel; 3) Christians are a distinct people formed out of individuals from all human races (*Why This New Race*, 99).

32. On the Sifra, see Hermann Leberecht Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, trans. M. Bockmuehl (Minneapolis, 1992), 259–64; and Menahem Kahana, “The Halakhic Midrashim,” in *The Literature of the Sages*, ed. S. Safrai et al. (Minneapolis, 2006), 2:78–87.

33. On Akiva vs. Yishmael, see discussions in Kahana, “Halakhic Midrashim,” 17–39; and Azzan Yadin, *Scripture as Logos: Rabbi Ishmael and the Origins of Midrash* (Philadelphia, 2004), x–xii. For a description and explanation of the complicated organization of the Sifra, see Shlomo Naeh, “The Structure and Division of Torah Kohanim (A): Scrolls” (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 66.4 (1997): 483–515; and Naeh, “The Structure and Division of Torah Kohanim (B): Parashot, Perakim, Halakhot” (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 69.1 (2000): 59–104. On this particular section of the Sifra, see Hirshman, *Torah for the Entire World*, 45–60; Hirshman, “Rabbinic Universalism in the Second and Third Centuries,” *HTR* 93.2 (2000): 107–10; Jacob N. Epstein, *Mevo'ot le-sifrut ha-tana'im; Mishnah, Tosefta ve-midreshe halakhah* (Jerusalem, 1957), 640; Louis I. Finkelstein, “Midrash, halakhot ve-hagadot,” *Sifra* 5 (New York, 1983), 112–14; and Menahem Kahana, *Manuscripts of the Halakhic Midrashim: An Annotated Catalog* (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1995), 86–87.

34. This sentence is inserted in a superscript.

35. Translation based on the text of Vatican Codex Assemani 66 (Ebr. 66), in Louis Finkelstein, *Sifra or Torat Kohanim according to Codex Assemani 66 (Facsimile Edition)* (Hebrew; New York, 1956), 373–74. See parallel *baraita* in bBK 38a; bSan 59a, b'AZ 3a, where the teaching is attributed to R. Meir and abbreviated.

36. In a lecture at the Jewish Theological Seminary on March 16, 2009 (“R. Yirmiah, Tanna of Deve R. Yishmael and the Equality of Israel and the Nations”), Shamma Friedman argued that while R. Yirmiah does not appear as the author of this teaching in all its variants, the attribution to R. Yirmiah is the original version.

37. On the history of the expression “does Torah” in late biblical, Qumranic, and rabbinic literature, see Hirshman, *Torah for the Entire World*, 53–54.

38. See Alan Segal, *Rebecca's Children: Judaism and Christianity in the Roman World* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), 177, who argues that it does reflect Jewish proselytizing efforts. But see Martin Goodman, *Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1994), 132, who takes this text as evidence against proselytizing, since according to its logic, a Gentile need not convert to attain the Torah's rewards.

39. The touchstone for this approach is Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* (Princeton, N.J., 2001).

40. I make this argument more fully in Beth Berkowitz, “Allegory and Ambiguity: Jewish Identity in Philo's *De Congressu*,” *JJS* 61.1 (2010): 1–17.

41. On the ambiguities of the biblical passage and an exploration of its interpretation into modernity, see my *Defining Jewish Difference: From Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge, 2012).

CHAPTER 2

I gratefully acknowledge the support of the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies in the preparation of this essay. Earlier versions of the essay were delivered at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Tennessee.

1. Julius Africanus, *Cesti* 1.20, ed. J.-R. Vieillefond, *Les "Cestes" de Julius Africanus* (Florence, 1970), 182.28–31. The new GCS edition of the *Cesti* was unavailable when this essay was completed.

2. See Francis C. Burkitt, *Early Eastern Christianity* (London, 1904), 27.

3. See Sebastian Brock, "Eusebius and Syriac Christianity," in *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism*, ed. H. W. Attridge and G. Hata (Detroit, 1992), 212–34, esp. 222–24; and Steven K. Ross, *Roman Edessa: Politics and Culture on the Fringes of the Roman Empire* (London, 2001), 133–36. Cf. also Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (New York, 1987), 279, who guardedly describes Abgar as a "Christian sympathizer."

4. For the Christian presence in Edessa during the reign of Abgar the Great, see the *Chronicle of Edessa*, which refers to a flood that destroyed the "sanctuary of the church of the Christians" during his reign (201 CE). Syriac text and Latin translation in *Chronica Minora*, ed. I. Guidi, CSCO 1–2, *Scriptores Syri* 1–2 (Leuven, 1955), 1 (Syriac text); 3 (Latin trans.). *The Book of the Laws of Countries*, attributed to Bardaisan (henceforth *BLC*), speaks of Christians in "every place and in all climates," 58.24–25, ed. and trans. H. J. W. Drijvers (Assen, 1964).

5. See Han J. W. Drijvers, "A Tomb for the Life of a King: A Recently Discovered Edessene Mosaic with a Portrait of King Abgar the Great," *Le Muséon* 95.1/2 (1982): 167–89: "[T]he mosaic . . . fits into the whole pagan cultural pattern of Edessa qua representation and qua terminology which Abgar's city shared with Hatra, Palmyra and the Nabatean kingdom" (189). See also Ross, *Roman Edessa*, 133–35.

6. Burkitt, *Early Eastern Christianity*, 27.

7. On the ascetic movement in Syriac Christianity, see Sidney H. Griffith, "On Asceticism in the Early Church of Syria: The Hermeneutics of Early Syrian Monasticism," in *Asceticism*, ed. V. Wimbush (New York, 1995), 220–45.

8. Lucian, *The Double Indictment*, ed. A. M. Harmon (Cambridge, Mass., 1921), 27.

9. Ed. and trans. M. Whittaker (Oxford, 1982).

10. On Bardaisan and Greek culture, see, e.g., Ross, *Roman Edessa*, 119–22. For Syriac interactions with Greek culture in general, see Sebastian Brock, "Syriac Attitudes to Greek Learning," in *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period*, ed. N. G. Garsoïan, T. F. Matthews, and R. W. Thomson (Washington, D.C., 1982), 17–34.

11. Ephrem, *Hymns against Heresies* 1.12.1–2, ed. and trans. E. Beck, in *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen contra Haereses*, CSCO 169, 170, *Scriptores Syri* 76, 77 (Leuven, 1957). For discussion of Bardaisan's anti-ascetic tendencies, see Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (London, 2006), 11; and Han J. W. Drijvers, *Bardaisan of Edessa* (Assen, 1966), 110, 205, 226. On Syriac Christian asceticism, see Sebastian Brock, "Early Syrian Asceticism," in Brock, *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity* (London, 1984), 1–19.

12. Drijvers, *Bardaisan*, 219. See also Drijvers, "The School of Edessa: Greek Learning and Local Culture," in *Centres of Learning: Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near East*, ed. J. W. Drijvers and A. A. MacDonald (Leiden, 1995), 49–59, esp. 52–53.

13. See Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East: 31 BC–AD 337* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993), 472–81; and Ross, *Roman Edessa*, 83–116.

14. See Gabriel Herman, "The Court Society of the Hellenistic Age," in *Hellenistic Constructs: Essays in Culture, History and Historiography*, ed. P. Cartledge (Berkeley, Calif., 1997), 199–224, esp. 213ff.

15. *Historia Augusta: Aurelianus*, 30.3, ed. and trans. D. Magie, LCL (Cambridge, Mass., 1932); Zosimus, *Historia Nova*, 1.56.2, ed. and trans. F. Paschoud (Paris, 1971–89); and Suda, s.v. Longinos, ed. A. Adler (Leipzig, 1928–35). On Longinus in the Palmyrene court, see Richard Stoneman, *Palmyra and Its Empire* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1992), 129–31; Javier Teixidor, “Palmyra in the Third Century,” in *A Journey to Palmyra: Collected Essays to Remember Delbert R. Hillers*, ed. E. Cussini (Leiden, 2005), 206–8; and Warwick Ball, *Rome in the East* (London, 2000), 79.

16. There is nothing in Africanus’s preserved writings to support Heinrich Gelzer’s claim that Africanus was a Roman officer at the time he befriended the king; see his *Sextus Julius Africanus und die byzantinische Chronographie* 1 (New York, 1967 [1885]), 8. On Africanus in Abgar’s court, see Ilaria L. E. Ramelli, “Edessa e i Romani tra Augusto e i Severi: Aspetti del regno di Abgar V e di Abgar IX,” *Aevum* 73.1 (1999): 134–36.

17. Africanus, *Chronographiae*, F96, ed. Martin Wallraff, GCS N.F. 15 (Berlin, 2007) = George Syncellus, *Ecloga Chronographica*, 439.21, ed. A. A. Mosshammer (Leipzig, 1984). For a discussion of the meaning of this phrase, see Lucas van Rompay, “Jacob of Edessa and the Early History of Edessa,” in *After Bardaisan: Studies on Continuity and Change in Syriac Christianity in Honour of Professor Han J. W. Drijvers*, ed. G. J. Reinink and A. C. Lugkist (Leuven, 1999), 284 n. 61.

18. See Victor A. Troncoso, “Paideia und Philia in der Hofgesellschaft der hellenistischen Zeit,” in *Aspects of Friendship in the Graeco-Roman World*, ed. M. Peachin (Portsmouth, R.I., 2001), 81–87.

19. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 56.3, ed. K. Holl, GCS 31 (Leipzig, 1922), 2.338.9–11.

20. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 56.3 (Holl, 2.340.4–5).

21. See Drijvers, *Bardaisan*, 166–212.

22. Africanus, *Cesti* 1.20.44–53 (Vieillefond, 185).

23. Africanus, *Cesti* 1.20.57–65 (Vieillefond, 185–86).

24. On participation in the royal hunt as a sign of social standing in the Hellenistic age, see Robin Lane Fox, “Ancient Hunting: Homer to Polybios,” in *Human Landscapes in Classical Antiquity*, ed. G. Shipley and J. B. Salmon (London, 1996), 137–47.

25. Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, 1.4.14, ed. E. C. Marchant (Oxford, 1970); cf. Plutarch, *Moralia*, 173D, ed. W. Nachstadt (Leipzig, 1925–38), who says that Artaxerxes did the same.

26. Ctesias, *FrGH*, 3C 688 F 14 (43), *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, ed. F. Jacoby (Leiden, 1958), 3.467.12–26. See Pierre Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire* (Winona Lake, Ind., 2006), 230–31.

27. Africanus, *Cesti* 1.20.31–38 (Vieillefond, 182).

28. Africanus, *Cesti* 1.20.4–27 (Vieillefond, 180–82).

29. Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 489–523.

30. On Bardaisan the Armenian, see Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, 7.32.1, ed. M. Marcovich (Berlin, 1986). For Bardaisan as Babylonian and Mesopotamian, see below.

31. On the distinctive costume of Scythian and Parthian archers, see David Braund, *Scythians and Greeks: Cultural Interaction in Scythia, Athens, and the Early Roman Empire* (Exeter, 2005), 100–105; and Peter Wilcox, *Rome’s Enemies: Parthians and Sassanid Persians* (Oxford, 1986), 12–13.

32. For Greek and Roman constructions of Parthians and Scythians, see Benjamin H. Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton, N.J., 2004), 66–67, 99, 110–11, 208, 370–89; Susan P. Matern, *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate* (Berkeley, Calif., 2002), 70–73; Edith Hill, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (Oxford, 1989), 114–15, 138–39, 214–15; and François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus* (Berkeley, Calif., 1988), 1–11, 318–22.

33. For the Greek devaluation of archery, see J. E. Lendon, *Soldiers and Ghosts* (New Haven, Conn., 2006), 33–34, 47–48, 55–56, 96, 310.

34. See David Braund, “Scythians in the Cerameicus: Lucian’s *Toxaris*,” in *Pontus and the Outside World: Studies in Black Sea History, Historiography, and Archaeology*, ed. C. Tuplin (Leiden, 2004), 17–24; and Graham Anderson, *Studies in Lucian’s Comic Fiction* (Leiden, 1976), 12–23.
35. Africanus, *Cesti* 1.20.48–51 (Vieillefond, 185).
36. *Acts of Sharbil*, in *Ancient Syriac Documents Relative to the Earliest Establishment of Christianity in Edessa and the Neighbouring Countries*, ed. and trans. W. Cureton (Piscataway, N.J., 2005 [1864]), 41.20–22.
37. Alfred R. Berlinger and C. Bradford Welles, “A Third-Century Contract of Sale from Edessa in Osroene,” *YCIS* 5 (1935): 138–39. For transcription of the Syriac text with commentary, see Jonathan A. Goldstein, “The Syriac Bill of Sale from Dura-Europos,” *JNES* 25.1 (1966): 1–16.
38. *Doctrina Addai*, f. 2b, ed. and trans. G. Howard, *The Teaching of Addai* (Chico, Calif., 1981), 6.
39. *Doctrina Addai*, f. 33a (Howard, 105).
40. *Doctrina Addai*, f. 33a (Howard, 106).
41. *Doctrina Addai*, f. 33a (Howard, 106).
42. Berlinger and Welles, “A Third-Century Contract of Sale,” 138–39.
43. See, e.g., the *Chronicle of Edessa* (following its account of the flood in Edessa), 8: “Mar Yahab Bar Shemesh, and Kajuma Bar Magartat, the scribes of Edessa, recorded this event, and the command of Abgar the king; and Bar Din and Bulid, who are prefects over the archives of Edessa, received and deposited it within them as *sharirs* of the city.” On the meaning of the term *sharir*, see J. B. Segal, *Edessa, “The Blessed City”* (Oxford, 1970), 20; and Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents*, 143 (n. to line 14).
44. Moses of Chorene, *History of the Armenians* 2.27, trans. R. W. Thomson (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), 165.
45. *PDura* 28, lines 27–28, ed. Goldstein, “The Syriac Bill of Sale,” 3.
46. See Berlinger and Welles, “A Third-Century Contract of Sale,” 135–37.
47. *Martyrdom of Barsamya*, in Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents*, 72.6–9.
48. See Muriel Debié, “Record Keeping and Chronicle Writing in Antioch and Edessa,” *ARAM* 12 (1999/2000): 409–17.
49. On Eratosthenes as the third librarian of the Museion in Alexandria, see POxy. 1241, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, ed. B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt (London, 1914), 102, col. ii, 5–6.
50. Africanus, *Chronographiae*, T99 (= Syncellus 123.10–12), ed. M. Wallraff, GCS N.F. 14 (Berlin, 2007).
51. Moses of Chorene, *History of the Armenians* 2.10 (Thomson, 145–46). For arguments in favor of the historical veracity of this report, see Aram T’op’ch’yan, “Julius Africanus’ Chronicle and Movses Xorenac’i,” *Muséon* 114 (2001): 153–85; and T’op’ch’yan, *The Problem of the Greek Sources of Movses Xorenac’i’s History of Armenia* (Leuven, 2006), 75–76.
52. Moses of Chorene, *History of the Armenians* 2.66 (Thomson, 212–13).
53. Ball, *Rome in the East*, 79.
54. On the cultural life of Palmyra, see Stoneman, *Palmyra and Its Empire*, 129–32; Teixidor, “Palmyra in the Third Century,” 205–11; and Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 319–36.
55. Zenobia’s dictation of the letter in Syriac makes the author of the *Scriptores* suspicious of her claim that Longinus was behind it.
56. See Ross, *Roman Edessa*, 46–56.
57. On the problem of identification, see Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 476.
58. For Edessa after the removal of Abgar, see *ibid.*, 476–81; and Ross, *Roman Edessa*, 57–68. For

discussion of the Syriac witnesses on the fall of the Edessene kingdom, see van Rompay, “Jacob of Edessa,” 274–76.

59. See also Drijvers, *Bardaisan*, 71.

60. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 56.5 (Holl, 2.339.5–340.4). See also Eusebius, *HE* 4.30.2, who says that Bardaisan wrote several works in response to Roman persecution.

61. Moses of Chorene, *History of the Armenians* 2.66 (Thomson, 212–13). For the problems, see Thomson 12–13, 212 n. 2.

62. On Bardaisan’s ethnography of India, see Drijvers, *Bardaisan*, 173–75; Jean W. Sedlar, *India and the Greek World* (Totowa, N.J., 1980), 173–75; and John J. O’Meara, “Indian Wisdom and Porphyry’s Search for a Universal Way,” in *Neoplatonism and Indian Thought*, ed. R. B. Harris (Albany, N.Y., 1982), 13–17. For general overview, see Albrecht Dihle, “The Conception of India in Hellenistic and Roman Literature” [1964], repr. in *Antike und Orient*, ed. V. Pöschl and H. Petersmann (Heidelberg, 1984), 89–97.

63. Jaap-Jan Flinterman, “Sophists and Emperors: A Reconnaissance of Sophistic Attitudes,” in *Paideia*, ed. B. Borg (Berlin, 2004), 359.

64. See also Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum* 2.14 (PL 23.304A) (on the authority of Bardaisan): “And when the king comes to them [the Brahmins and Samanaeans], he is accustomed to venerate them and to suppose that the peace of his region depends on their prayers.”

65. See Porphyry, *On the Styx*, quoted in Stobaeus, *Anthologium*, 1.3.56, ed. C. Wachsmuth and O. Hense (Berlin, 1958).

66. Moses of Chorene, *History of the Armenians* 2.66 (Thomson, 212–13).

67. The section that follows refines and develops arguments that I have set out in two previous papers: “The *Cesti* and Sophistic Culture in the Severan Age,” in *Die Kestoi des Julius Africanus und ihre Überlieferung*, ed. M. Wallraff and L. Mecella (Berlin, 2009), 1–15; and “Sextus Julius Africanus and the Roman Near East in the Third Century,” *JTS* 55.2 (2004): 520–50.

68. Africanus, *Chron.* F46.54–55 (= Syncellus 64.5–6).

69. Africanus, *Cesti* 5.1.50–54 (Vieillefond, 291). According to Eusebius, *HE* 6.20.1, Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem from 212 to 250 CE, founded the library in Jerusalem. If this is the same library in which Africanus made his discovery, it would suggest that the library’s holdings extended beyond Christian works; see Harry Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church* (New Haven, Conn., 1997), 154. It is unclear why Africanus refers to the “archives” of Jerusalem, as opposed to the “library” of Rome. Conceivably, he was trying to draw a verbal connection between “the archives” (*archeiois*) of his “former” (*archaias*) ancestral home.

70. Josephus, *Ant.* 1.93, quoting the Babylonian priest and historian Berossus.

71. Africanus, *Chron.* F23.18–20 (= Syncellus 22.6–8).

72. Africanus, *Chron.* F26.13 (= Syncellus 114.13).

73. The extent of Jewish and Christian participation in the fair is disputed. See Joan A. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places* (Oxford, 1993), 86–95; Aryeh Kofsky, “Mamre: A Case of a Regional Cult,” in *Sharing the Sacred: Religious Contacts and Conflicts in the Holy Land*, ed. A. Kofsky and G. G. Stroumsa (Jerusalem, 1998), 19–30; and Béatrice Caseau, “The Fate of Rural Temples in Late Antiquity,” in *Recent Research on the Late Antique Countryside*, ed. W. Bowden, L. Lavan, and C. Machado (Leiden, 2004), 123–26.

74. Jerome, *In Zachariam* 3 (11.4–5), ed. M. Adriaen, CCSL 76 A (Turnhout, 1970), 851.114–20.

75. Sozomen’s description of the continuation of the festival almost a century later implies that Constantine’s prohibition did not succeed.

76. Africanus, *Chron.* F30b.6–11. A later redactor, evidently offended by Africanus’s reference to

pagan practices at the site of the tree, anachronistically emended the words *ta te holokautōmata kai tas hekatombas* to *tas ektenas* (F30a.10), the later public prayers in the Byzantine liturgy. For unknown reasons, Africanus locates the festival in Shechem, not Mamre.

77. Africanus, *Chron.* F30a.15–17 (= Syncellus 123.20–21).

78. Africanus, *Chron.* F98 (= Eusebius, *HE* 6.31.2).

79. Africanus, *Epistle to Aristides*, in Eusebius, *HE* 1.7.14.

80. *Chronicon Paschale*, 499.6–8, ed. L. Dindorf, CSHB (Bonn, 1832); cf. Eusebius, Jer. *Canones* 214th (Ol. 250.3 = 221 CE), ed. R. Helm, 3rd ed.; GCS Eusebius Werke 7 (Berlin, 1984).

81. For a discussion of the problems associated with the location of Emmaus, see Rainer Riesner, “Wo lag das neutestamentliche Emmaus (Lukas 24,13)?,” *ZAC* 11.2 (2007): 201–20.

82. Eusebius, *Onomasticon*, s.v. Emmaous, ed. E. Klostermann, GCS Eusebius Werke 3.1 (Leipzig, 1904), 90.15–17.

83. See Sozomen, *HE* 5.21.5–7; and Theophanes, *Chronographia* 49.19–22, ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig, 1883).

84. On Severus Alexander’s dealings with Christians, see N. Santos *Yanguas*, “La dinastía de los Severos y los cristianos,” *Euphrosyne* 11 (1981–82): 149–71; and Ilaria L. E. Ramelli, “La Chiesa di Roma in età severiana: Cultura classica, cultura cristiana, cultura orientale,” *RSCI* 54.1 (2000): 13–29.

85. Africanus, *Cesti* 5.52–54 (Vieillefond, 290). Africanus was prone to self-aggrandizing exaggeration, and what he means by “designed” is disputed. See Vieillefond, *Les “Cestes,”* 21; and Adolf von Harnack, “Julius Afrikanus, der Bibliothekar Kaisers Alexander Severus,” in *Aufsätze, Fr. Milkau gewidmet*, ed. G. Leyh (Leipzig, 1921), 142–46.

86. See Fergus Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World: 31 BC–AD 337* (London, 1992), 495–96.

87. See Tim Whitmarsh, “Prose Literature and the Severan Dynasty,” in *Severan Culture*, ed. S. Swain, S. J. Harrison, and J. Elsner (Cambridge, 2007), 43–45.

88. For Michael Psellus’s inventory of Africanus’s amulets and related devices, see *Cesti* 9.1 (Vieillefond, 316–20) = Michael Psellus, *Opusc.* 32.13–64, in J. M. Duffy, ed., *Michaelis Pselli Philosophica Minora*, vol. 2: *Opuscula logica, physica, allegorica, alia* (Leipzig, 1992), 110–11.

89. See Vieillefond, *Les “Cestes,”* 50–52: “[I]l atteint les sommets de l’art sophistique et, avant la lettre, du gongorisme” (52). See further Adler, “The *Cesti* and Sophistic Culture,” 13–14.

90. Africanus, *Cesti* 1.2.90–95 (Vieillefond, 119).

91. Africanus, *Cesti* 9.1.46–47 (Vieillefond, 319) = Michael Psellus, *Opusc.* 32.59–60 (Duffy, 111).

92. Africanus, *Cesti* 1.15.1–2 (Vieillefond, 153).

93. Africanus, *Cesti* 1.19.22–26 (Vieillefond, 173).

94. Africanus, *Cesti* 1.17.27–29 (Vieillefond, 165).

95. Michael Psellus, *Opusc.* 36.26–29 (Duffy, 121).

96. See Glen Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1969), 17–58.

97. See Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 145–47, 303–8.

98. Africanus, *Cesti* 5.51–52 (Vieillefond, 201).

99. One early opinion, credited by the Roman historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Roman Antiquities*, 1.10.1–3) to Cato and Sempronius, held that they were colonists from Greece.

100. Africanus, *Chron.* F24.

101. On the prestige of Assyria and its celebrity royal couple, Ninus and Semiramis, see Christopher P. Jones, “Multiple Identities in the Age of the Second Sophistic,” in *Paideia*, ed. Borg, 19–20; and Bahadır Yıldırım, “Identities and Empire: Local Mythology and the Self-Representation of Aphrodisias,” in *Paideia*, 36–37.

102. Africanus, *Cesti* 1.21.49–59 (Vieillefond, 115–17).

103. Africanus, *Cesti* 1.1.1–5 (Vieillefond, 105). On Greek authors of the second and third centuries identifying themselves as Romans, see Jonas Palm, *Rom, Römertum und Imperium in der griechischen Literatur der Kaiserzeit* (Lund, 1959), 54–55, 135.
104. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 56.3 (Holl, 2.338.10).
105. See Brock, “Eusebius and Syriac Christianity,” 233, who points out that these words are lacking in the corresponding text found in Eusebius’s excerpts from the work (*PE* 6.10.44).
106. Eusebius, *HE* 6.31.1; cf. Rufinus *ad loc.*, ed. E. Schwartz, GCS Eusebius 2.2 (Leipzig, 1908), 585.24–25; and Jerome, *De viris illustribus*, 63, ed. E. C. Richardson (Leipzig, 1896), 36.26–37.5.
107. Scholium on Eusebius, *HE* 6.31 (in Codex Laurentianus plut. 70.20).
108. See Giuseppe S. Assemani, *Bibliotheca orientalis* (Piscataway, N.J., 2002 [1730]), 2.158; 3.14 (from Dionysius Bar Salibi and Ebed Jesu).
109. See also Adler, “The *Cesti* and Sophistic Culture,” 9–11.
110. “Polymath of the highest order”: Michael Italicus, *ep.* 31, in *Michel Italiko: Lettres et discours*, 222.7, ed. P. Gautier AOC 14 (Paris, 1972); “Professor of medicine”: Fulgentius, *Mythologiae* 3.17.121a 2, ed. R. Helm (Leipzig, 1898); and “Philosopher”: Suda, Lex., s.v. *Aphrikanos* A4647.1, ed. A. Adler (Leipzig, 1928–38).

CHAPTER 3

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1. For good recent exemplars of the debates about the Mishnah and legal continuity, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, “The Judaean Legal Tradition and the *Halakhah* of the *Mishnah*,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, ed. C. E. Fonrobert and M. S. Jaffee (Cambridge, 2007), 121–43; and Aharon Shemesh, *Halakhah in the Making: The Development of Jewish Law from Qumran to the Rabbis* (Berkeley, Calif., 2009), 3–7 and bibliography there.
2. Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society: 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* (Princeton, N.J., 2001), 120 and n. 56: “No one was compelled to accept rabbinic judgment. The rabbis could threaten plead and cajole but could not subpoena or impose a sentence. Only the Roman governor and his agents had such authority.” See also Natalie B. Dohrmann, “The Boundaries of the Law and the Problem of Jurisdiction in an Early Palestinian Midrash,” in *Rabbinic Law in Its Roman and Near Eastern Context*, ed. C. Hezser (Tübingen, 2003), 83–104; also from the same volume, Jill Harries, “Creating Legal Space: Settling Disputes in the Roman Empire,” 63–82.
3. S. Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, 103. David Weiss Halivni famously explores the Mishnah as discontinuous—not in terms of its legalism per se but in terms of its argumentation. See his *Midrash, Mishnah, and Gemara: The Jewish Predilection for Justified Law* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986).
4. Comparative studies of Jewish and Roman law owe massive debt to the spadework of Boaz Cohen, Lieberman, Daube, Yaron, Gulak, and others. Bernard S. Jackson details the difficulties facing a comparison and tracing influence between Roman and law and rabbinic halakhah, in “On the Problem of Roman Influence on the Halakhah and Normative Self-Definition in Judaism,” in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, ed. E. P. Sanders (Philadelphia, 1981), 2:157–203. See, more recently, Shemesh, *Halakhah in the Making*; and cf. Catherine Hezser, who notes the many similarities between the systems, in “Roman Law and Rabbinic Legal Composition,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud*, ed. Fonrobert and Jaffee, 151–52.

5. Bernard S. Jackson, "Legalism," *JJS* 30.1 (1979): 2–3.

6. *Ibid.*, 2.

7. For a model of an important corrective to the retrojection of rabbinic structures into pre-rabbinic Judaism, see Martin Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Tradition in Palestinian Judaism, 200 BCE–400 CE* (Oxford, 2001), chap. 3, where he unravels centuries of reading evidence of orality and law for the Pharisees as unproblematically proto-rabbinic.

8. Seth Schwartz, "The Rabbi in Aphrodite's Bath," in *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, ed. S. Goldhill (Cambridge, 2001), 337, 348. Beth Berkowitz has argued that the rabbis themselves never concede their powerlessness and that when talking about jurisprudence and legal violence, the laws should be read strongly on their own terms (as agents of force), before we layer on the historical reality and its own hermeneutical imperatives; *Execution and Invention* (Oxford, 2006), esp. 71.

9. For context and contrast, the pre-rabbinic Judaism of Josephus alone reveals a religion peopled by many holy types: prophets, priests, miracle workers, scribes, teachers, warriors, bards, ascetics, and apocalyptic visionaries. See Christine Hayes, "The 'Other' in Rabbinic Literature," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud*, ed. Fonrobert and Jaffee, 259–60; and Alan J. Avery-Peck, "The Galilean Charismatic and Rabbinic Piety: The Holy Man in Talmudic Literature," in *The Historical Jesus in Context*, ed. A. Levine et al. (Princeton, N.J., 2006), 149–65. For context, see the special issue of *JECJS* (6.3 [1998]) dedicated to the idea of the holy man, esp. in Christian antiquity.

10. S. Schwartz, "The Rabbi in Aphrodite's Bath," 336.

11. For aggadah as popular and not rigorous, see bSot 40a and SongR 2.5; when ill, SongR 2.5; aggadot like wine, GenR 66.3; and requiring heart not head, SifreDeut § 317. This generic-curricular separation becomes extreme in the Bavli, as shown by Jeffrey L. Rubenstein, *Culture of the Babylonian Talmud* (Baltimore, 2003), esp. chaps. 1, 2, and 5.

12. Natalie B. Dohrmann, "Law and Narrative in the Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael: The Problem of Midrashic Coherence" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1999).

13. Rachel A. Anisfeld, *Sustain Me with Raisin-Cakes: Pesikta deRav Kahana and the Popularization of Rabbinic Judaism* (Leiden, 2009), 147–62.

14. In this, I depart from the approach of James Kugel, who sees the atomizing engine of rabbinic midrash to be continuous with Second Temple Bible exegesis. While certain aspects are certainly shared, I am not convinced that the nonnarrative fragmentation of tannaitic aggadah is comprehended by or rooted in the context of the large and coherent narrative structures of Second Temple biblical narrative cycles (be they closely exegetical or not).

15. S. Schwartz remarks that the "distinctiveness of Jewish literary production of the High Empire, of which rabbinic literature is all that is extant," is "self-evident"; "The Rabbi in Aphrodite's Bath," 337. Steven Fraade has done important work placing genre questions at the center of the conceptual study of this material; see, e.g., his "Looking for Legal Midrash at Qumran," in *Biblical Perspectives: Early Use and Interpretation of the Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. M. E. Stone and E. G. Chazon (Leiden, 1998), 59–79; and Fraade, "Looking for Narrative Midrash at Qumran," in *Rabbinic Perspectives: Rabbinic Literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. S. D. Fraade, A. Shemesh, and R. A. Clements (Leiden, 2006), 43–66.

16. See Tim Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitation* (Oxford, 2001), 18–23, and his complexification of Woolf's notion of a relatively stable Greekness, against which Romanization was a dynamic threat/promise. He argues that the process of being Greek was very complicated, and one profitable lens is mimesis. Woolf, "Becoming Roman, Staying Greek: Culture, Identity and the Civilizing Process in the Roman East," *PCPhS* 40 (1994): 116–43.

17. Marc Hirshman, *A Rivalry of Genius: Jewish and Christian Biblical Interpretation in Late Antiquity*, trans. B. Stein (Albany, N.Y., 1996), 10. See also Arkady Kovelman, “Continuity and Change in Hellenistic Jewish Exegesis and in Early Rabbinic Literature,” *RRJ* 7.1 (2004): 126–27.

18. I am not arguing that rabbinic literature is cut from wholly new cloth. Many of its component elements are clearly bound to Jewish antecedent, thematically and methodologically. Still, that the Mishnah represents legal innovation has much scholarly support. See S. Cohen, “The Judaeae Legal Tradition”; and Hayim Lapin, *Early Rabbinic Civil Law and the Social History of Roman Galilee: A Study of Mishnah Tractate Baba’ Mesi’a* (Atlanta, 1995). Their focus is on legal innovation and the evolution of legal forms. I am asking a related but slightly different question: not what kind of law, but why law at all.

19. In this, I depart from Hirshman: rabbinic distinctiveness in the rabbinic period is not primarily its insistent exegetical-ness—which is evident in nearly all Second Temple literature—but its insistent legality.

20. Fraade, “Looking for Legal Midrash,” 78.

21. Tim Whitmarsh, “‘Greece Is the World’: Exile and Identity in the Second Sophistic,” in *Being Greek under Rome*, ed. Goldhill, 305.

22. One might say that rabbinic literature is not properly legal; since it has no force of law, halakhah is not the main topic but is merely rhetorical discourse that provides the raw material for what is really, say, a philosophical, theological, ethical, or polemical corpus. One might also argue that the process of study, *talmud torah*, and the academic scene make up the meaning and locus of rabbinic religiosity; or that the rabbis study law only because the Bible gives them law. For the sake of argument, we may grant any of these premises and still be left with the overwhelming fact of a rabbinic text world that is increasingly defined by and focused on law and that lionizes its mastery as the most important mode of engagement with God. Even if we were to grant the line that the rabbis write, e.g., philosophy (which I do not), it can hardly be insignificant that they choose law talk to do so. The process of a rigorous engagement with Scripture, even its first five books, by no means mandates a legal focus. E. P. Sanders, “Jacob Neusner and the Philosophy of the Mishnah,” in his *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah* (London, 1990), 309–31.

23. Adapted from Jacob Neusner, trans., *The Mishnah* (New Haven, Conn., 1988), 779.

24. See Dohrmann, “Law and Narrative,” conclusion.

25. Elisha Qimron and John Strugnell, *Qumran Cave 4: V, Miqsat Ma’ase Ha-Torah*, DJD 10 (Oxford, 1994), 117; and Daniel R. Schwartz, “MMT, Josephus and the Pharisees,” in *Reading 4QMMT: New Perspectives on Qumran Law and History*, ed. J. Kampen and M. J. Bernstein (Atlanta, 1996), 75–76.

26. Not to mention law itself; see S. Cohen, “The Judaeae Legal Tradition,” 138.

27. Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East 331 BC–AD 337* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993), 528; and Andrew W. Lintott, *Imperium Romanum: Politics and Administration* (London, 1993), 41.

28. S. Schwartz on the city, in *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, 129–61. On urban and domestic spaces in Roman terms, see Charlotte E. Fonrobert, “The New Spatial Turn in Jewish Studies,” *AJS Review* 33.1 (2009): 155–64; and Gil P. Klein, “Non-Canonical Towns: Representation of Urban Paradigms in Talmudic Understanding of the Jewish City,” *Studia Rosenthaliana* 40 (2007/08): 231–63. On the army in the east, see Benjamin Isaac, *The Limits of Empire: The Roman Army in the East* (Oxford, 1992 [1990]).

29. See the work of Clifford Ando, esp. his *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley, Calif., 2000).

30. On corruption, see different perspectives of Jill Harries, *Law and Empire in Late Antiquity*

(Cambridge, 2001), chaps. 4, 8; and Christopher Kelly, *Ruling the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004), esp. chap. 2.

31. Propaganda-rich civic rites were shunned by traditional Jews on similar grounds.

32. Cf. Woolf's treatment of Roman Gauls in this regard to Schwartz's study of Roman Jews: Greg Woolf, *Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge, 1998); and Seth Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society? Reciprocity and Solidarity in Ancient Judaism* (Princeton, N.J., 2009), chap. 5.

33. Jewish resistance to classical models of Romanization, however, might be as easily subordinated to the distinctive imperviousness of the Hellenized east in general to certain aspects of Romanization as it is to particular indigenous "Jewish" reasons. Woolf, *Becoming Roman*, 18–20.

34. Yaron Z. Eliav, "Jews and Judaism 70–429 CE," in *A Companion to the Roman Empire*, ed. D. S. Potter (Malden, Mass., 2006), 577.

35. GenR 94.9, 9.13, which extol Rome for her peace- and justice-keeping powers. For the classic essay on Jewish identification with Rome, see Gerson Cohen, "Esau as Symbol in Early Medieval Thought," in *Jewish Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, ed. A. Altman (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 19–48.

36. See Lapin, in this volume, for the subtle interplay between the culturally explicit and implicit in this imperial horizon.

37. See, e.g., Moshe Halbertal, "Coexisting with the Enemy: Jews and Pagans in the Mishnah," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. G. N. Stanton and G. G. Stroumsa (New York, 1998), 165. For pagan cult objects that proliferated in the rabbinic urban space, see S. Schwartz's study of rabbinic strategies for accommodating and copacetically cohabiting with pagan cult images, "The Rabbi in Aphrodite's Bath."

38. Clifford Ando, "The Administration of the Provinces," in *A Companion to the Roman Empire*, ed. Potter, 179.

39. Emphasis mine. Ando, *Imperial Ideology*, 5; see also Woolf, *Becoming Roman*, 24 n. 2. In a review of Ando (BMCR 2001.10.15), George W. M. Harrison says that the Roman people "living within the confines of the Empire were willing participants ([Ando's] term is 'ideological consciousness' in continuing the existence of a state defined by *ius civile* and *ius gentium* since people continued to believe in the state's ability and volition to be just towards its citizens."

40. See Ando on Habermas, in *Imperial Ideology*, 75.

41. That local gods were an engine driving Roman success served the Roman cause and was an easy narrative for provincial populations to assimilate. Attributing foreign military success to the God of Israel, in particular, had venerable Jewish precedent—having been written into covenantal theodicy from its inception (see Leviticus 26, the Deuteronomic narratives, and passim; cf. Josephus, *War* 6.230–326).

42. Ando emphasizes a multifaceted idea of imperial "charisma" throughout *Imperial Ideology*. See also his reflections on the Antonine legal project in Ando, *Law, Language, and Empire in the Roman Tradition* (Philadelphia, 2011), 21, 36. For a suggestive treatment of imperial rescripts and their social as well as legal function in the late third century, see Serena Connolly, *Lives behind the Laws: The World of the Codex Hermogenianus* (Bloomington, Ind., 2010), 97; and Connolly, "Petitioning in the Ancient World," in *Medieval Petitions: Grace and Grievance*, ed. G. Dodd, A. Musson, and W. Ormrod (York, 2009), 47–63.

43. I am not addressing two other major contact points between Jews and empire: the military and taxes; Woolf, *Becoming Roman*, 15. See also Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London, 1992), 4; and Levinson, in this volume. On the centrality of the military to Romanization in the east, see Millar, *The Roman Near East*, sec. 1; or Isaac, *The Limits of Empire*.

44. Michael Peachin, *Iudex vice Caesaris: Deputy Emperors and the Administration of Justice during the Principate* (Stuttgart, 1996), 1, 3 n. 15 (reading a passage from Lucian); Amram Tropper, “Roman Contexts in Jewish Texts: On *Diatagma* and *Prostagma* in Rabbinic Literature” *JQR* 95.2 (2005): 207–27; and, i.e., *Peskita rabati* 33.

45. On movement and popularity of Roman courts in eastern provinces, see Maud W. Gleason, “Greek Cities under Roman Rule,” in *A Companion to the Roman Empire*, ed. D. S. Potter (Malden, Mass., 2006), 241; and Dio Chrysostom 35.15. See also J. J. Aubert, “Conclusion: A Historian’s Point of View,” in *Speculum Iuris: Roman Law as a Reflection of Social and Economic Life in Late Antiquity*, ed. J. J. Aubert and B. Sirks (Ann Arbor, Mich., 2002), 182–92; and J. A. Crook, *Law and Life of Rome* (London, 1967), 7–13.

46. Ando, *Imperial Ideology*.

47. Saul Lieberman, “Roman Legal Institutions in Early Rabbinics and in the *Acta Martyrum*,” in *Texts and Studies* (New York, 1974), 62–66; and Tropper, “Roman Contexts,” 214–17.

48. Catherine Hezser, “Roman Law and Rabbinic Legal Composition,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud*, ed. Fonrobert and Jaffee, 147–51; and Alan Watson, *Law Making in the Later Roman Republic* (Oxford, 1974), 101–10.

49. See Harries, *Law and Empire*, 15–16 (“for ambitious men, seeking to make their mark, the emperor’s service was the best avenue for advancement”); and below. Fergus Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (London, 2003 [1977]), 83–100; and Peachin, *Iudex vice Caesaris*, 34–53, on the ex-officio legal expert as essential to the working of the court.

50. Harries, *Law and Empire*, 16; see also the essays in Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf, eds., *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, 1994), esp. by Woolf and Kelly.

51. Jill Harries, “Violence, Victims, and the Legal Tradition in Late Antiquity,” in *Violence in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Practices*, ed. H. A. Drake (Aldershot, 2006), 87; see also Hezser, “Roman Law and Rabbinic Legal Composition,” 146.

52. Cf. Watson, *Law Making in the Later Roman Republic*, 101–10; and Gleason, “Greek Cities under Roman Rule,” esp. 242–45.

53. If we combine this with other suggestive parallels, a matrix emerges that begs for further investigation: like the rabbis, “the Greeks had to live under some form of Roman rule, comfortably or uncomfortably, and come to terms with the art of accommodating their past glories to it”; Graham Anderson, *The Second Sophistic: A Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire* (London, 1993), 2. As with the rabbis, the sophists’ atticizing was a modality of counter-imperial identity formation inhabiting an archaized linguistic past, often seemingly impervious to the political world; similarly, “one could not make Greek sophists take more than a peripheral interest in Roman history” (*ibid.*, 126). Cf. Amram Tropper, “The Fate of Jewish Historiography after the Bible: A New Interpretation,” *H&T* 43 (2004): 179–97. On the meaning of Hebrew for tannaitic culture, see Seth Schwartz, “Language, Power and Identity in Ancient Palestine,” *P&P* 148 (1995): 31–35. More generally, Goldhill, ed., *Being Greek under Rome*; Anderson, *Second Sophistic*; Glen Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1969); Philostratus, *The Lives of the Sophists*, trans. W. C. Wright (Cambridge, Mass., 1961); Tim Whitmarsh, *The Second Sophistic* (Oxford, 2005); Simon Swain, *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism and Power in the Greek World, AD 50–250* (Oxford, 1996); and Maud Gleason, *Making Men: Sophists and Self-Presentation in Ancient Rome* (Princeton, N.J., 1994). On the influence of Greek rhetorical forms, esp. the *chreia*, in mishnaic argument forms, see Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth*, 126–40.

54. Anderson, *Second Sophistic*, 17, 30–35, 64–74; and Bowersock, *Greek Sophists*, 30–58.

55. Joseph Geiger, “Notes on the Second Sophistic in Palestine,” *ICS* 19 (1994): 221–30. On sophists as travelers, see Bowersock, *Greek Sophists*, 17, 21; and Anderson, *Second Sophistic*, 24–30.

56. See Martin Jaffee, “The Oral-Cultural Context of the Talmud Yerushalmi: Greco-Roman Rhetorical Paideia, Discipleship, and the Concept of Oral Torah,” in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture I*, ed. P. Schäfer (Tübingen, 1998), 27–61.

57. Connolly, *Lives behind the Laws*, 159.

58. Ando documents the enormous energy that Romans used to disseminate and advertise information about the law and its sincerity and rationality; *Imperial Ideology*, 73–140.

59. Seth Schwartz writes that in the third century, “rabbinic sources assume that in this period the rabbis became a distinctive component of a para-governmental legal and religious establishment”; “The Political Geography of Rabbinic Texts,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud*, ed. Fonrobert and Jaffee, 78.

60. Hayim Lapin, “The Rabbinic Class Revisited: Rabbis as Judges in Later Roman Palestine,” in *Follow the Wise: Studies in Jewish History and Culture in Honor of Lee I. Levine*, ed. Z. Weiss et al. (Winona Lake, Ind., 2010), 255–73; Shaye J. D. Cohen, “The Place of the Rabbi in Jewish Society of the Second Century,” in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. I. Levine (New York, 1992), 157–73; and Dohrmann, “The Boundaries of the Law,” 91–95.

61. Ando, *Law, Language, and Empire*, 83, 114; Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*; Millar, “Emperors at Work” [1967], repr. in *Rome, the Greek World, and the East*, ed. H. Cotton and G. M. Rogers (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2004), 3; Ando, *Imperial Ideology*, 74; Harrison, in BMCR 2001.10.15; Peachin, *Iudex vice Caesaris*, 162; and G. P. Burton, “Provincial Procurators and the Public Provinces,” *Chiron* 23 (1993): 13–28. On Babatha: Cotton, Millar, and others. Note that Ando cites German scholar L. Huchthausen on the use of Roman legal institutions by women and slaves; *Imperial Ideology*, 74 n. 2. The increasingly inaccessible (priced-out) nature of later justice, the pay-for-service bureaucracy described by Christopher Kelly, does not mean that those arenas did not affect the rabbis. The ability to pay and play or not would have been stigmatizing or status-realigning realia. Jill Harries’s work on the empire’s many modes of arbitration, which grew up to answer the new barriers to official court venues would only have multiplied competition. And complaints about corruption were not, according to Harries, signs of a broken system; *Law and Empire*, esp. chap. 8.

62. Peachin, *Iudex vice Caesaris*, 5, 12; and Callie Williamson, “Monuments of Bronze: Roman Legal Documents on Bronze Tablets,” *CA* 6.1 (1987): 160–83; bronze tablets publicly posted were often illegible and therefore not meant to communicate legal content but legal power. On coins, see the *aureus* of Octavian depicted as restorer and patron of the legal order; J. W. Rich and J. H. C. Williams, “*Leges et iura P. R. restituit*: A New *Aureus* of Octavian and the Settlement of 27–28 BC,” *NCe* 159 (1999): 169–213. See also Carsten H. Lange, *Res publica constituta: Actium, Apollo and the Accomplishment of the Triumviral Assignment* (Leiden, 2009), 182; cf. Carlos F. Noreña, *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West: Representation, Circulation, Power* (Cambridge, 2011), 63–71.

63. See Harries, *Law and Empire*, 15.

64. On the texture and frustrations of engagement with Roman power, see Brent Shaw, “Josephus: Roman Power and Responses to It,” *Athenaeum* 83.2 (1995): 357–90. Ramsay MacMullen says that the Roman Empire was an “oily, present-giving world”; *Corruption and the Decline of Rome* (New Haven, Conn., 1988), 126 (cited in Kelly, *Ruling the Later Roman Empire*, 132). But Jill Harries, *Law and Empire*, esp. chaps. 4, 8; see also Peachin, *Iudex vice Caesaris*, 11–12.

65. Tessa Rajak, “Was There a Roman Charter for the Jews?,” *JRS* 74 (1984): 112, 118. Josephus exaggerates Jewish successes in legal disputes and highlights Roman backing in ways not always commensurate with reality. For parallels, see a paradigm analyzed in the Jewish Middle Ages by Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi—what he terms the “royal alliance,” [with] its concrete realities, its theoretical underpinnings, its mythological inflations, and its consequences for Jewish destinies—in

Servants of Kings and Not Servant of Servants: Some Aspects of the Political History of the Jews (Atlanta, 2005), 8.

66. What Tom Sizgorich calls the “distinctively Roman coupling and interpenetration of violence with reason”; “Reasoned Violence and Shifty Frontiers: Shared Victory in the Late Roman East,” in *Violence in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Practices*, ed. H. A. Drake (Aldershot, 2006), 168.

67. Peachin does a good job of entangling favor and law—both part of the same gesture. Seth Schwartz traces a similar operating procedure to the patriarch, with whom the rabbis were closely affiliated, and the rabbis similarly depict themselves in influential conversation with the emperor and other high officials, in “Big-Men or Chiefs: Against an Institutional History of the Palestinian Patriarchate,” in *Jewish Religious Leadership*, ed. J. Wertheimer, 2 vols. (New York, 2004), 1:155–73.

68. Emperor as rival to god is everywhere attested, most especially in the voluble denial of their similarities that run through so many midrashic parables.

69. See Talgam, in this volume.

70. Whitmarsh, “Greece Is the World,” 305.

71. S. Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society*; and Schwartz, “Language, Power and Identity,” 31–35.

72. Greg Woolf, “Beyond Romans and Natives,” *World Archaeology* 28.3 (1997): 344.

73. Woolf, *Becoming Roman*, 24 n. 2. On specific studies of a structural appropriation of Roman ways of thought, see Seth Schwartz, “Rabbinic and Roman Honor and Deference: Y. Berakhot 5.1, 9a, and Y. Bikkurim 3.3, 65c–d,” in *Follow the Wise*, ed. Weiss et al., 399; and Natalie B. Dohrmann, “Manumission and Transformation in Jewish and Roman Law,” in *Jewish Biblical Interpretation and Cultural Exchange*, ed. N. B. Dohrmann and D. Stern (Philadelphia, 2008), 51–65.

CHAPTER 4

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1. The passage is cited in almost every work on women or marriage law in rabbinic literature; the literature is too lengthy to cite. I have been most influenced by Cynthia M. Baker, *Rebuilding the House of Israel: Architectures of Gender in Jewish Antiquity* (Stanford, Calif., 2002), 98–107, 126–33; and Baker, “When Jews Were Women,” *HR* 45 (2005): 119–33.

2. “Jews” (*yehudim*) is the reading in the Kaufman (A50) and Parma (de Rossi 138) MSS, one Genizah Mishnah fragment (Oxford 2666, 2), collated in Moshe Hershler, ed., *The Babylonian Talmud: Kethuboth*, 2 vols. (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1972), 2:171. Others read “Jewess” (*yehudit*); see below. According to Hershler’s apparatus, another Genizah Mishnah fragment (Oxford 2826, 101–2) has *yehudit* at the first instance and *yehudim* at the second; but at both locations, marginal text provides the other reading.

3. Almost all witnesses to the Mishnah add “Which is ‘loud’? Anyone who speaks and her neighbors hear her voice.” This appears to be an inserted gloss based on a tradition that appears in the Tosefta (tKet 7.7) and is attributed to Samuel (Rab has a different view) in the Palestinian Talmud (yKet 7.6, 31b; cf. bKet 72b). See Jacob N. Epstein, *Introduction to the Mishnaic Text*, 2 vols. (Hebrew; 3rd ed.; Jerusalem, 2000), 2:950; Hershler, ed., *Kethuboth*, 2:171–72 and n. 49.

4. On this, too, the literature is extensive; but see Elias J. Bickerman, “Two Legal Interpretations

in the Septuagint,” in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History*, ed. E. Bickerman (Leiden, 1976–1986), 1:201–15; Michael L. Satlow, *Jewish Marriage in Antiquity* (Princeton, N.J., 2001), 213–16; Mordechai Akiva Friedman, *Jewish Marriage in Palestine: A Cairo Geniza Study* (Tel Aviv, 1980), 239–87; and Bernard S. Jackson, “Problems in the Development of the Ketubah Payment: The Shimon ben Shetah Tradition,” in *Rabbinic Law in Its Roman and Near Eastern Context*, ed. C. Hezser (Tübingen, 2003), 199–225.

5. mKet 7.1–5: “he must divorce and give the marriage settlement” (*yotsi wi-yiten ketubah*); mKet 7.9–10 “they (do not) force . . . to divorce” ([*en*] *kopin . . . le-hotsi*). Cf. tSot 5.9: it is a “commandment” (*mitsvah*) to divorce her, where *mitsvah* may be weaker than a practical obligation (*hovah*) (see, e.g., tKet 4.8). On the other hand, in mKet 7.7, “she goes out without a *ketubah*,” may be taken to mean at the husband’s discretion.

6. According to SifreNum 11 (ed. Horovitz, 17), the obligation to cover or bind hair is derived from Num 5.18; this derivation is cited also at bKet 72a–b.

7. tKet 4.9, concluding “and Israel”; cf. yYeb 15, 14d (yKet 4.6, 29a), with “and the Jews.” “Israel” is the form used also in tKet 7.6. See also *P.Yadin* II 10; *P.Mur.* 20.3 (largely restored); cf. Ada Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic, Hebrew and Nabataean Documentary Texts from the Judean Desert and Related Material*, 2 vols. (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 2000), A, 119; *P.Mur.* 19.8, 21, a divorce document, as restored by Yardeni, *Textbook*, A, 131. In these documents, the word for “law” is *din*, where the Mishnah has *dat*.

8. Marriage document: mYeb 15.3; m’Ed 1.12; tKet 4.11, and passages cited infra; wife’s receipt of marriage settlement: tKet 4.11; Sifra, *Metsora* parasha 4.16; lease of land: mBM 9.3, tBM 9.10 (= tKet 4.10), 12, 13; hire of animal: tKet 5.10; loan document: tKet 4.12. The Yerushalmi assembles these into a series of traditions in which a rabbi “made a *ketubah* [here, “written deed”] [the basis of] a midrash,” yYeb 15, 14d (yKet 4.6, 29a; cf. bBM 114a). See also the citation of the operative divorce and manumission formulae in mGit 9.3.

8. The verb in Eleazar b. Azariah’s statement is *darash*, as of a verse; see also 13.3; mBB 9.1. See Hayim Lapin, “Maintenance of Wives and Children in Early Rabbinic and Documentary Texts from Roman Palestine,” in *Rabbinic Law*, ed. Hezser, 177–98. Friedman, *Jewish Marriage in Palestine*, 366–70, 374–77, attempts to account for the logic and underlying textual history of Eleazar b. Azariah’s exposition. Cf. Epstein, *Introduction to the Mishnaic Text*, 502, arguing that Eleazar b. Azariah’s statement refers instead to mKet 13.3, but placement suggests that the editors of the Mishnah deemed it a comment on the documentary form.

10. Greek: *P.Hev.* 69 (= *P.Yadin* 37); *P.Mur.* 115, 116. Aramaic: *P.Mur.* 20, 21; *P.Yadin* 10.

11. *P.Mur.* 21.8–10; the order of 115.8–10 also seems to preclude this conclusion. See also Friedman, *Jewish Marriage in Palestine*, 366–67; and Hannah M. Cotton, “The Guardianship of Jesus Son of Babatha: Roman and Local Law in the Province of Arabia,” *JRS* 83 (1993): 80–81 = *P.Hev.* 69, excursus, 271–73.

12. *P.Yadin* I 18.16, 51; 37 (= *P.Hev.* 65).9–10. On the formula, see Abraham Wasserstein, “A Marriage Contract from the Province of Arabia Nova: Notes on Papyrus Yadin 18,” *JQR* 80.1/2 (1989): 93–130; Ranon Katzoff, “Papyrus Yadin 18 Again: A Rejoinder,” *JQR* 82.1/2 (1991): 171–76; and Katzoff, “On *P.Yadin* 37 = *P.Hev.* 65,” in *Law in the Documents of the Judean Desert*, ed. R. Katzoff and D. M. Schaps (Leiden, 2005), 136.

13. Closely related to the “mishnaic” deeds, but also apparently linking dowry and maintenance are *P.Hev.* 69.6–10 and *P.Yadin* II 10.10: ‘*im din [lahmi]k . . .*’ cf. *P.Yadin* I 37 (= *P.Hev.* 65).9, *syn hairesei trophēs*.

14. This bears comparison to “Egyptian” law in Roman Egypt, on which see Joseph Mélèze

Modrzejewski, “La loi des Égyptiens: Le droit grec dans l’Égypte romaine” [1988], repr. in *Droit impérial et traditions locales dans l’Égypte romaine* (Aldershot, 1990), chap. 10, distinguishing two phenomena, one “indigenous,” and the other “Greek.”

15. For the strongest statement of collapse of Judaism in the post-70 period, see Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* (Princeton, N.J., 2001).

16. See, e.g., Susan Starr Sered, “‘Woman’ as Symbol and Women as Agents: Gendered Religious Discourses and Practices,” in *Revisioning Gender*, ed. M. Marx Ferree, J. Lordier, and B. B. Hess (Walnut Creek, Calif., 1998), 193–221. For treatments of the recent Islamic context, see Valentine M. Moghadam, *Modernizing Women* (Boulder, Colo., 2003), 135–70; and Melinda Cooper, “Orientalism in the Mirror: The Sexual Politics of Anti-Westernism,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 25 (2008): 25–49. Indian and British deployments of the Indian wives and the practice of sati play an important role in Gayatri C. Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?,” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (Urbana, Ill., 1988), 271–313.

17. Cf. mYom 3.8; 4.2; 6.2; “Torah of Moses,” in this case, quoting (appropriating?) a liturgical formula. In mAvot 1.1, Moses pointedly receives the Torah from “Sinai.”

18. mMeg 2.3; mKet 7.6; mNed 11.12, with Baker, “When Jews Were Women,” 114–34; see, more generally, Peter J. Tomson, “The Names Israel and Jew in Ancient Judaism and the New Testament (Part II),” *Bijdragen* 47.3 (1986): 266–89. Baker provides further bibliography.

19. For the readings, see above, n. 2. To prefer *yehudit* as *lectio difficilior* would mean (1) preferring, in this case, the Babylonian tradition against the (generally more conservative) Palestinian; and (2) viewing *yehudim* as a “correction” back to the conventional documentary form. The first runs against the consensus view that the Palestinian textual tradition is more conservative; the second is somewhat strained. On the other hand, *yehudit* is exceedingly rare. Excluding the lemma from Gen 36.24 naming the wife of Esau (GenR 65.1, ed. Theodor Albeck, 713, as printed; absent in MS Vatican 30), *yehudit* appears in Palestinian rabbinic literature in an allusion to our passage (NumR 8.9, MS Munich 97, cited from Academy for the Hebrew Language, “Historical Dictionary Project,” <http://hebrew-treasures.huji.ac.il>, a rather late midrash); and in several allusions to Esther as Jewess (LevR, ed. Margalio, 610–11; parallels at LamR 1.41; Tanḥuma, *Emor* 3, 35b–36a; Tanḥuma Buber, *Emor* 5, ed. Buber, 84; EstherR 7.4). The Babylonian Talmud has some of the same usages (bKet 72a–b; bMeg 15b); a reference to another biblical context (bSan 19b); but also the name of the wife of a rabbi (bYeb 65b; bKid 12b) and another legal context (b’AZ 26a).

20. Baker, “When Jews Were Women,” 131. The same may be true of mNed 11.12, the other nonbiblical use of “Jews.” But there, the wife vowing that she is “removed from the Jews” (understood subsequently to make herself sexually inaccessible to her husband) may be cast as taking the apostate’s position with respect to “the Jews.” Possibly, too, in mNed 11.12, there is an oblique reference to the “law of Moses and the Jews”: her vow removes her from the field of reference to which the normative marriage contract applied.

21. Saul Lieberman, *Tosefta ki-fshuta*, 10 vols. (New York, 1955; henceforth *TK*), 6:291: open and revealing shoulders and arms, rather than literally torn. If so, perhaps a “gap-sleeved tunic”? (Alexandra T. Croom, *Roman Clothing and Fashion* [Stroud, 2000], 76–78).

22. Erfurt MS: “her heart is coarse toward her male slaves and her heart is coarse toward her neighbors”; favored by Lieberman, *TK*, 6:291; cf. tSot 5.9; ySot 1.7, 17a.

23. The very fragmentary Genizah text, Cambridge, T-S E2.141, reads “with people” (*‘im bene adam*) at this point; Shamma Y. Friedman and Leib Moscovitz, “Primary Textual Witnesses to Tannaitic Literature” (Hebrew), <http://www.biu.ac.il/JS/tannaim>.

24. Cf. a partial parallel in mKet 7.5.

25. yKet 7.5, 31a cites the tradition from Babylonia (“there”) that this refers to spilling semen (see also bKet 72a, with Rashi, s.v. *she-temale’ we-nofetset*).

26. tKet 7.6 (end)–7. The standard view has long been that the Tosefta serves as a kind of commentary to the Mishnah. Recently, scholars have attempted to invert that relationship. See, e.g., Shamma Friedman, *Tosefta Atikta, Synoptic Parallels of Mishna and Tosefta Analyzed, with a Methodological Introduction* (Hebrew; Ramat Gan, 2003); and Judith Hauptman, *Rereading the Mishnah: A New Approach to Ancient Jewish Texts* (Tübingen, 2005).

27. For “speaking” understood sexually, see mKet 1.8; bKet 72b understands “speaking” and “spinning” to have sexual connotations. The Yerushalmi does not specifically address this question, but much of the pericope deals with sexual transgression.

28. Cogently noted by Baker, *Rebuilding*, 98–99, arguing that, at least with respect to spinning, the subtext is the Mishnah’s ideological insistence on a domestic economy and with it on women’s contribution to textile production that is progressively being eroded (108–9). For sexualized interpretations, see bKet 72b.

29. For the literal understanding of “loud” in Tarfon’s tradition, see n. 3 above. Here, too, are sexualized interpretations: yKet 7.7, 31b (other sleepers in the house can hear her when she has sex); various traditions in bKet 72b. The *Bavli*’s “she serves [*meshameshet*, has sex?] in her courtyard, and her voice is heard in another courtyard” seems to be a revision of the Tosefta’s tradition.

30. Cf. Judith Hauptman, *Rereading the Rabbis: A Woman’s Voice* (Boulder, Colo., 1998), 8, arguing that the Tosefta is regularly “more lenient and hence more beneficial to women” than the Mishnah, though one might debate the “beneficence” of the Tosefta in this case. (Note the use to which this same material is put in tSot 5.9.) It is possible that bathing in public is itself at issue, a rather more restrictive interpretation, but cf., e.g., mKet 7.8; tNid 6.9, which take women’s bathing for granted. For baths and bathing in rabbinic literature (specifically the Yerushalmi), see Martin Jacobs, “Römische Thermenkultur im Spiegel des Talmud Yerushalmi,” in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture*, ed. P. Schäfer (Tübingen, 1998), 219–311.

31. The evidence is admittedly spotty. Hair covering is presupposed, e.g., by 1 Cor 11.4–16 (not to be solely attributed to “Jewish” custom). Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* 6.3.10, reports that Sulpicius Gallus divorced his wife for going out uncovered; Plutarch, *Roman Questions* 267B–C, reports the opposite, but his discussion nevertheless implies that Roman women were covered (J. L. Hilton and L. L. V. Matthews, “Veiled or Unveiled? [Plut. Quaest. Rom. 267B–C],” *CQ* 58.1 [2008]: 336–42). See also Plutarch, *Greek Questions* 302E–303A (of Chalcedon); and Dio Chrysostom, *Discourses* 33.48–49 (of Tarsus). At Palmyra, especially in funerary monuments, women appear with head coverings; Malcolm A. R. Colledge, *The Art of Palmyra* (Boulder, Colo., 1976), 255–66; and J. Dentzer-Feydy and Javier Teixidor, *Les antiquités de Palmyre au Musée du Louvre* (Paris, 1993), plates. Whether the same is true elsewhere in Syria or the Roman East is harder to determine. The literature on 1 Corinthians 11 is vast. For Roman practices in general, see Ramsay MacMullen, “Women in Public in the Roman Empire,” *Historia* 29.2 (1980): 208–9. Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, *Aphrodite’s Tortoise: The Veiled Woman of Ancient Greece* (Swansea, 2003), claims continuity from archaic Greece to 200 CE, but the evidence is overwhelmingly pre-Roman.

32. Clement of Alexandria, *Paidagogos* 3.32–33, ed. Stählin, 255; *Didascalia apostolorum* 1.6.13; 1.9 ed. Funk 16, 26–28; Syriac, 2, 3.pr., ed. Vööbus, CSCO 401, Script. Syri 175, 19, 26–27.

33. Cassius Dio 69.1.2 (this portion preserved only in a medieval epitome); SHA, Hadrian, 18.10 (*lavacra pro sexibus separavit*); Marcus Antonius 23.8; and Alexander Severus 24.2. There are inscriptions, e.g., *CIL* II 5181 (= *ILS* 6891), cited in Fikret K. Yegül, *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992), 46–47, from present-day Portugal, which specify bathing hours for women and men.

34. Roy Bowen Ward, "Women in Roman Baths," *HTR* 85.2 (1992): 125–47.
35. Pliny the Elder, *Historia Naturalis* 33.153 (54). See also 29.26 (8); and Plutarch, *Marcus Cato*, 20.
36. The last word reads *BNShYM*. Lieberman, *TK*, 8, 660 to lines 40–41, favoring the reading "men" (*B'NShYM*; presumably due to elision of *alef*), as in the parallels at ySot 1.7, 17a, and NumR 9.12. But cf. Lieberman's comments to lines 42–44, where the same textual variation appears.
37. Michael L. Satlow, "Texts of Terror': Rabbinic Texts, Speech Acts, and the Control of Mores," *AJS Review* 21.2 (1996): 273–97.
38. Miriam Peskowitz, *Spinning Fantasies: Rabbis, Gender, and History* (Berkeley, Calif., 1997), 143, under the larger heading of "gossip" and the policing gaze. Visibility (and its inverse, structured invisibility) is a central theme in Baker, *Rebuilding*, as well.
39. Does the stipulation of a *sinar* in bBK 82a insist on such a uniform?
40. Cf. Thomas A. McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome* (New York, 1998), 154–56, on the Augustan adultery legislation that regulates the clothing of Roman women.
41. It does elsewhere quote the version in tSot 5.9, ySot 1.7, 17a; the practice of Pappos b. Judah (Judah b. Pappos) is cited in yKid 4.4, 65d. The immediate context in yKet 7.6, 31c does know traditions that immediately follow in tKet 7.7. However, it is not clear in this instance that the Yerushalmi knows the Tosefta as such.
42. Leiden MS has "both of them slapping" (*shenehem topaḥot*, f. pl.); Saul Lieberman, *Laws of the Palestinian Talmud* (Hebrew; New York, 1947), 60, proposes reading only *topaḥat*, "her slapping" (citing medieval witnesses), and interprets it as "evidence" that she is washing away semen.
43. Cf. bYeb 24b–25a, where the parallel items are attributed to Judah the Patriarch.
44. Before Ada b. Ahava? Judah the Patriarch?
45. Text from "They asked" to this point follows the text of Lieberman, *Laws*, 60–61. The Leiden MS has: "They asked before him: 'Even if he put his mouth on hers?' He said: 'A case such as this involving one whom they saw putting his mouth on hers. The matter came before . . .'" and the whole of C is an extended quotation posing chronological problems and involving an awkward shift from Hebrew to Aramaic.
46. So Leiden MS; Lieberman, *Laws*, 61–62, containing an extract of this passage has "with half her dowry," as in Abun's statement below. Dowry; *PRN*, from Greek *phernē*.
47. *PRNH*, again from *phernē*.
48. yKet 77, 31c. In this last clause, Lieberman's text is slightly different, and the statement reads as a declarative sentence: "She is as one. . . ."
49. For the *baraita* at yKet 7.6, 31c, and its relationship to tKet 7.7, see Lieberman, *TK*, 6:292–93, who restores the *baraita* on the basis of the Tosefta; the *baraita* nevertheless ends with a clause about *shem ra'* not in the Tosefta. For the association with *shem ra'*, cf. Maimonides, *Code, Laws of Marriage*, 24:15 ("how does she go out because of a bad name . . ."). See also Meiri, *Bet ha-behira*, b. Ket. 72b, ed. A. Sofer (Schreiber) et al., *Bet Ha-behira*, 100. Or Zaru'a *Yibum we-kidushin*, ed. H. L. Shapira and Y. H. Shapira, *Or Zaru'a*, 1, 615. The Babylonian Talmud cites its parallel to this material in connection with a man suspected of having an affair with his wife when she was previously married to another.
50. See also yKet 5.9, 30b. To the description of the marriage as "partnership" (*shutafuteh*, significantly, mangled in the Leiden MS: *ShWR PWTH*), cf. *P.Yadin* I 18.8, 38–39: *koinonia tou gamou kata tous nomous*.
51. Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, book 9, includes four such stories, including one in which the husband returns to find strange shoes under his bed, 9.21, followed by a formal judicial accusation of

adultery; see also the various scenarios invoked by Juvenal, *Satires*, book 6. See also R. W. Reynolds, “The Adultery Mime,” *CQ* 40.3/4 (1946): 77–84; and Donald Lateiner, “Marriage and the Return of Spouses in Apuleius’ ‘Metamorphoses,’” *CJ* 95.3 (2000): 313–32. The motif—and the ability to play with it—is clearly familiar to the Yerushalmi: see yTer 8.5, 45c; y’AZ 2.3, 41a (on which, see Tal Ilan, “Stolen Water Is Sweet: Women and Their Stories between the Bavli and the Yerushalmi,” in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture II*, ed. P. Schäfer and C. Hezser [Tübingen, 2002], 189–91). For a treatment of the motif in the Bavli, see Joshua Levinson, “An-Other Woman: Joseph and Potiphar’s Wife, Staging the Body Politic,” *JQR* 87.1/2 (1997): 269–301. On the “pornographic” function of rabbinic stories, see Satlow, “Texts of Terror,” 291–94.

52. In the Yerushalmi, *sotah* for “adulteress” appears only here and in the opening chapter of yKet. In the latter occurrences, the usage almost certainly does not mean *sotah* in the technical sense, which requires both a formal warning to the wife and an incident of seclusion before the biblical procedure is to be carried out (mSot 1.1–2; tSot 1.1–20). In the list that concludes our pericope (and, by implication, in the list that opens it?), it is possible that a specific legal mobilization of *sotah* is being undertaken: defining what activities are the equivalent of the Mishnah’s requirement of seclusion. If my suggestion above—that our pericope begins with the definition of *shem ra’*^c—is correct, our pericope may be redefining an additional traditional legal category.

53. See Zeev Weiss, “The Jews of Ancient Palestine and the Roman Games: Rabbinic Dicta vs. Communal Practice” (Hebrew), *Zion* 66.4 (2001): 427–59; and Martin Jacobs, “Theatres and Performances as Reflected in the Talmud Yerushalmi,” in *Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture II*, ed. Schäfer and Hezser, 327–47.

54. Cf. Dohrmann, in this volume.

55. Hayim Lapin, “The Rabbinic Class Revisited: Rabbis as Judges in Later Roman Palestine,” in *Follow the Wise: Studies in Jewish History and Culture in Honor of Lee I. Levine*, ed. Z. Weiss et al. (Winona Lake, Ind., 2010), 255–73.

56. Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, N.J., 2005), 34. “Hidden transcripts” refers to James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, Conn., 1990).

57. Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?”

58. Romanization and Gaul: Greg Woolf, *Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge, 1998); and Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993). Identities: “Greeks,” beginning with E. L. Bowie, “Greeks and Their Past in the Second Sophistic,” *P&P* 46.1 (1970): 3–41. Britain: Jane Webster, “Creolizing the Roman Provinces,” *AJA* 105.2 (2001): 209–25; and Webster, “Necessary Comparisons: A Post-Colonial Approach to Religious Syncretism in the Roman Provinces,” *World Archaeology* 28.3 (1997): 324–38. Arabs, Aramaeans, and others: Millar, *The Roman Near East*; and Millar, “Ethnic Identity in the Roman Near East, A.D. 325–450: Language, Religion, and Culture,” in Millar, *Rome, the Greek World and the East*, ed. H. M. Cotton and G. M. Rogers (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2006), 3378–405. Roman Egypt: Garth Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind* (2nd ed.; Princeton, N.J., 1993); and David Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt: Assimilation and Resistance* (Princeton, N.J., 1998).

59. “Almost inevitable” because even in the best of circumstances, our evidentiary base is wide but exceedingly shallow, so to say anything that links an individual artifact or datum into a social or historical context involves assuming a context that has coherence, e.g., that we know what we mean by Celts or Jews, or, in some ways, more problematic still, Romans. For problematization, see, e.g., Woolf’s parenthetical critique of his own earlier treatment in Greg Woolf, “Playing Games with

Greeks: One Roman on Greekness,” in *Greeks on Greekness: Viewing the Greek Past under the Roman Empire*, ed. D. Konstan and S. Said (Cambridge, 2006), 162 n. 2.

60. Again, perhaps inevitably, even when the goal is to avoid such dichotomizing, as in Yaron Z. Eliav, “Viewing the Sculptural Environment: Shaping the Second Commandment,” in *The Talmud Yerushalmi in Graeco-Roman Culture III*, ed. P. Schäfer (Tübingen, 2002), 411–34. Note also the disappointment in Peter Schäfer, “Jews and Gentiles in Yerushalmi Avodah Zarah,” in *Talmud Yerushalmi in Graeco-Roman Culture III*, ed. Schäfer, 351.

CHAPTER 5

1. R. Macaulay, *The Towers of Trebizond* (London, 1956), 72.
2. See Oded Irshai, “The Christian Appropriation of Jerusalem in the Fourth Century: The Case of the Bordeaux Pilgrim,” *JQR* 99.4 (2009): 465–86.
3. Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* (Princeton, N.J., 2001), 178.
4. Doron Bar, “The Christianization of Rural Palestine during Late Antiquity,” *JEH* 54.3 (2003): 402. Bar posits an important distinction between the conceptual and physical conversion of Palestine into a Christian Holy Land, which occurred mainly in the cities or along pilgrim routes during the fourth and early fifth centuries, and the conversion of the population, especially in the nonurban centers, which proceeded at a much slower pace, achieving real momentum only during the second half of the Byzantine period (406, 420). See also Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony, *Encountering the Sacred: The Debate on Christian Pilgrimage in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, Calif., 2005), 22; and Joseph Patrich, “Early Christian Churches in the Holy Land,” in *Christians and Christianity in the Holy Land*, ed. O. Limor and G. Stroumsa (Turnhout, 2006), 355–97.
5. Fergus Millar, “Transformations of Judaism under Graeco-Roman Rule: Responses to Seth Schwartz’s *Imperialism and Jewish Society*,” *JJS* 57.1 (2006): 154.
6. Doron Bar, “Population, Settlement and Economy in Late Roman and Byzantine Palestine (70–641 AD),” *BSOAS* 67.3 (2004): 307.
7. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London, 1992), 4.
8. Glenn Bowman, “Pilgrim Narratives of Jerusalem and the Holy Land: A Study in Ideological Distortion,” in *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, ed. A. Morinis (Westport, Conn., 1992), 156.
9. John Wilkinson, “Jewish Holy Places and the Origins of Christian Pilgrimages,” in *The Blessings of Pilgrimage*, ed. R. Ousterhout (Urbana, Ill., 1990), 41–53; and Wilkinson, “Visits to Jewish Tombs by Early Christians,” in *Akten des XII. Internationalen Kongresses für Christliche Archäologie* (Münster, 1995), 1:452–65.
10. David Satran, *Biblical Prophets in Byzantine Palestine* (Leiden, 1995), 118–20.
11. Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago, 1987), 79.
12. “The triumph of Christianity was expressed architecturally . . . wherever its sanctuaries were erected on sites sacred to pagans, Jews, or Samaritans, confiscating their locations for the new religion and serving polemic purposes”; Patrich, “Early Christian Churches in the Holy Land,” 361.
13. Andrew S. Jacobs, *Remains of the Jews* (Stanford, Calif., 2004), 14.
14. Robert L. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy* (New Haven, Conn., 1992), 194–202 at 195.
15. Joan E. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places: The Myth of Jewish-Christian Origins* (Oxford, 1993), 327–28.

16. “It is difficult to imagine that the Jews, even those living in the Galilee and the Golan—areas somewhat removed from the major areas of Christian activity, in Judaea and the larger urban centers—would or could be impervious to such changes”; Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven, Conn., 2000), 227. I do not dismiss lightly the possibility of rabbinic indifference or ignorance of these developments, given the imaginary border that separated western and eastern Galilee during the Byzantine period, the apparent difficulties of Christian penetration into the major areas of Jewish settlement, and the relatively small number of identifiable Christian archaeological remains so far discovered in these regions. To these factors we must also entertain the possibility that at least some classic rabbinic texts were redacted in the late fourth century, perhaps before the Christian presence was perceived as threatening. As Sussmann has remarked, the Jerusalem Talmud contains “no real echoes of the great and fateful events of the middle third of the fourth century, from Constantine to Julian”; “Revisiting Yerushalmi *Nezikin*,” *Mehkerei Talmud*, ed. Y. Sussmann and D. Rosenthal (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1990), 1:132. On the other hand, besides the fact that most of the texts discussed here were redacted after the Palestinian Talmud, there is a limit to what material culture can reveal on these matters: the perceived threat of Christianity simply cannot be quantified in a manner correlative to physical artifacts or demographics. So while Levine may be overstating the case, the opposite tack seems less likely.

17. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 6. I would only change Pratt’s formulation to stress competing cultures and not necessarily dominant ones. See Lapin, in this volume.

18. For a comprehensive and insightful treatment of the history and function of the so-called banishment of the Jews from Jerusalem and its environs, see Oded Irshai, “Constantine and the Jews: The Prohibition against Entering Jerusalem—History and Historiography” (Hebrew), *Zion* 60.2 (1995): 129–78.

19. The sources were collected and discussed in Shemuel Safrai, “Pilgrimage to Jerusalem after the Destruction of the Temple,” in *In Times of Temple and Mishnah*, ed. Safrai (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1994), 1:85–102; and Yaron Z. Eliav, *God’s Mountain: The Temple Mount in Time, Place, and Memory* (Baltimore, 2005), 190–99.

20. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 313.

21. Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints* (Chicago, 1981), 1.

22. Satran, *Biblical Prophets*, 112.

23. *Laus Constantini* 11.3 (ed. Drake, 103).

24. See also William Horbury, “The Cult of Christ and the Cult of the Saints,” *NTS* 44.3 (1998): 444–69; and Satran, *Biblical Prophets*, 110–17.

25. Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (New York, 1987), 448. “The venerated Jewish tombs had never been holy in the way that they soon became holy to the Christians” (Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 326). See E. Riak, “Bright Beginnings: Jewish Christian Relations in the Holyland, AD 400–700,” *Studies in Jewish Christian Relations* 6 (2011): 12 on the spatial proximity of Jewish and Christian graves to religious structures.

26. On graves and worship in early Christianity, see Ramsay MacMullen, *The Second Church: Popular Christianity A.D. 200–400* (Atlanta, 2009).

27. Later midrashic traditions transfer this tradition both to Adam and to Moses. The former was hidden in a “double” (= *mahpelah*) grave so that “his bones should not become idolatrous relics,” and likewise God explained to Moses that if he would be buried in Palestine, “the nations will make your grave a place of prayer” (*Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer*, 20; *Pitavon Torah* 9–10 [Urbach, 237]).

28. LamR, petihta 24; Israel Ta-Shma, “Holy Men Do Not Defile: Law and Ideology” (Hebrew), *JSIJ* 1 (2002): 52. See also Wilkinson, “Visits to Jewish Tombs,” 452–65, and the enigmatic comment of R. Elazar in LevR 5.5, which may indicate burial in synagogues.

29. The Babylonian Talmud develops a secondary argument distinguishing between visiting

Jewish and Gentile grave sites. In distinction from Christian “interfaith” practice, only Jewish graves were considered to be holy sites for effectual prayer for the rabbis.

30. On the attitude of medieval Jewish authorities toward sacred graves, see Ephraim Shoham-Steiner, “‘For a Prayer in That Place Would Be Most Welcome’: Jews, Holy Shrines, and Miracles—A New Approach,” *Viator* 37 (2006): 369–95.

31. There are earlier tannaitic parallels to this theme of bier and book in tSot 4.7; Mekhilta de-R. Ishmael, *Beshalah* 1; but see the ending of the story in yBer 2.3 (4.3), where R. Mana (late fourth century) emphasizes that both Joseph and Israel attained kingship and glory only because they kept the commandments, “and you want to remove his commandments from us”?!

32. Following Lieberman’s emendation, see Bernard Mandelbaum, *Introduction to the Pesikta de Rav Kahana* (New York, 1962), 199.

33. *Pesikta de-Rav Kahana* (PRK) (Braude and Kapstein, 220); and EcclR 11.2.

34. See also Gillian Clark, “Translating Relics: Victricius of Rouen and Fourth-Century Debate,” *EME* 10.2 (2001): 161–76.

35. Elizabeth A. Clark, “Claims on the Bones of St. Stephen: The Partisans of Melania and Eudocia,” *CH* 51 (1982): 141; and Martina Caroli, “Bringing Saints to Cities and Monasteries: *Translationes* in the Making of a Sacred Geography,” in *Towns and Their Territories between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. G. P. Brogiolo et al. (Leiden, 2000), 259–74.

36. Brown, *Cult of Saints*, 10.

37. Leah Di Segni, “On the Development of Christian Cult Sites on the Tombs of the Second Temple Period,” *ARAM* 19 (2007): 383.

38. Augustine, *City of God* 22:8 (see also *Confessions* 9.7.16); and Ambrose, *Ep.* 22.

39. Kenneth G. Holum and Gary Vikan, “The Trier Ivory, ‘Adventus’ Ceremonial, and the Relics of St. Stephen,” *DOP* 33 (1979): 113–33. This section was written with the generous assistance of Jeffrey Rubenstein, who provided me with an unpublished paper in which he discusses these themes and sources.

40. *Passion of Saints Sergius and Bacchus*, trans. J. Boswell, *Same Sex Unions in Premodern Europe* (New York, 1994), 389–90.

41. The one worm she does find is his punishment for once hearing a possible blasphemy and keeping silent. A late midrash says in the name of R. Yitzḥak: “*my flesh also dwells in safety* (Ps 16.9)—dwells in safety even after death. This verse proves that neither corruption nor worms had power over David’s flesh. . . . In the grave his flesh will not dissolve like dust” (Mid.Ps. 16.10 [ed. Braude, 201]). Wilkinson comments that “the Jews (and also the Christians) had now [late fourth century] begun to ask a new question, did the Righteous Ones suffer that kind of corruption?” (“Visits to Jewish Tombs,” 463).

42. Di Segni, “On the Development,” 391.

43. Elchanan Reiner, “From Joshua to Jesus: The Transformation of a Biblical Story to a Local Myth,” in *Sharing the Sacred*, ed. A. Kofsky and G. Stroumsa (Jerusalem, 1998), 223–71.

44. Robert A. Markus, “How on Earth Could Places Become Holy? Origins of the Christian Idea of Holy Places,” *J ECS* 2.3 (1994): 268; and Glenn Bowman, “Mapping History’s Redemption: Eschatology and Topography in the *Itinerarium Burdigalense*,” in *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, ed. L. I. Levine (New York, 1998), 163.

45. Ora Limor, “‘Holy Journey’: Pilgrimage and Christian Sacred Landscape,” in *Christians and Christianity in the Holy Land*, ed. Limor and Stroumsa, 326.

46. Jonathan Z. Smith, *Map Is Not Territory* (Leiden, 1978), 101; and Markus, “How on Earth,” 264–65.

47. Yonah Frenkel, *Studies in the World of Aggadic Narratives* (Hebrew; Tel Aviv, 1981), 149–52.

48. On the various terms that signify what we call pilgrimage, see Wendy Pullan, “‘Intermingled until the End of Time’: Ambiguity as a Central Condition of Early Christian Pilgrimage,” in *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, ed. J. Elsner and I. Rutherford (Oxford, 2005), 387–410; Gerhart B. Lardner, “Homo Viator: Medieval Ideas on Alienation and Order,” *Speculum* 42.1 (1967): 233–59; and M. A. Claussen, “‘Peregrinatio’ and ‘Peregrini’ in Augustine’s ‘City of God,’” *Traditio* 46 (1991): 33–75.

49. *Epistle to Diognetus* 5.5.5 (ed. Lightfoot, 540).

50. Zvi M. Rabinowitz, *The Liturgical Poems of Rabbi Yannai*, II (Jerusalem, 1985), 54.

51. Shulamit Elizur, “Exile in the Motherland: Expressions of Distress and Hope in the Liturgical Poetry of the Byzantine and Early Muslim Period,” *Jerusalem Studies in Hebrew Literature* (Hebrew, forthcoming). I want to thank the author for generously sharing this article before its publication.

52. Sabine MacCormack, “Loca Sancta: The Organization of Sacred Topography in Late Antiquity,” in *The Blessings of Pilgrimage*, ed. Ousterhout, 21.

53. Michel Foucault, “Different Spaces,” in *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, trans. R. Hurley (New York, 1998), 175–85. As he says, “[T]he ship is a floating space, a placeless place. . . . It is the heterotopia par excellence” (185).

54. Jaś Elsner, “Pausanias: A Greek Pilgrim in the Roman World,” *P&P* 135 (1992): 10.

55. Eusebius, *VC* 3.33 (ed. Cameron and Hall, 135); and Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places*, 129.

56. In 2 Baruch (6.1–10), the Temple’s vessels are miraculously swallowed up by the earth “so that strangers may not get possession of them” until the future restoration. An echo of this tradition may have survived in rabbinic literature, where it is related that two priests were working in the Temple’s Chamber of Wood. One of them saw an uneven flagstone (under which the Holy Ark was hidden), but he died before he could inform his fellow priest (mShek 6.2). For an illuminating treatment of these traditions and their development, see Ra’anan Boustan, “The Spoils of the Jerusalem Temple at Rome and Constantinople: Jewish Counter-Geography in a Christianizing Empire,” in *Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. G. Gardner and K. Osterloh (Tübingen, 2008), 327–72. For other possible examples of relocation, see Eyal Ben-Eliyahu, “The Rabbinic Polemic against Sanctification of Sites,” *JSJ* 40.2 (2009): 260–80.

57. E. D. Hunt, “Were There Christian Pilgrims before Constantine?,” in *Pilgrimage Explored*, ed. J. Stopford (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1999), 33; and Ora Limor, “Christian Traditions on the Mount of Olives in the Byzantine and Arab Periods” (Hebrew; M.A. thesis, Hebrew University, 1978).

58. In the Bible, David is said to have prayed here, and Solomon built a pagan shrine here (2 Sam 15.32; 1 Kgs 11.7); *T.Naphtali* 5.1; Josephus, *War* 2.13.5; *Ant.* 20.8.6. See Eyal Ben-Eliyahu, “The Mount of Olives: Between Jews and Christians in the Roman Byzantine Period” (Hebrew), *New Studies on Jerusalem* 4 (1998): 55–63.

59. Pierre Maraval, “The Earliest Phase of Christian Pilgrimage,” *DOP* 56 (2002): 66. On the migration of holy places in Palestine, see Reiner, “From Joshua to Jesus.”

60. Luke 24.50; Acts 1.11; 4 Bar 9.20; Eusebius, *VC* 3.43; Cyril, *Cat.* 12.11; 14.23; and Egeria 33.1–2, 39.3. See also Josephus, *War* 2.13.5; Limor, “Christian Traditions”; Taylor, *Christians and Holy Places*, 153; and J. G. Davies, “The Peregrinatio Egeriae and the Ascension,” *VigChr* 8.1/2 (1954): 93–100.

61. See Oliver Nicholson, “Constantine’s Vision of the Cross,” *VigChr* 54.3 (2000): 309–23.

62. PRK 13.11 (ed. Braude and Kapstein, 261–62).

63. Elchanan Reiner, “Pilgrims and Pilgrimage to Erets Yisrael: 1099–1517” (Hebrew; Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, 1988), 182–84.

64. A possible version of this tradition appears in the early rabbinic text *Seder ‘olam* (26), which mentions the departure of the Divine Presence from the Temple and the ten stations in connection

with Ezekiel 10–11, without naming the individual stations beyond “the hill east of the city” (Ezek 11.23). My student, Akiva Shlesinger, has pointed out that three and a half years is the approximate duration of the Bar Kokhba rebellion. See also Lieberman, *Shkikin*, 78.

65. Tanḥuma Buber, *Devarim* 6; and DeutR (ed. Lieberman), 25.

66. See Menahem Kister, *Studies in Avot de-Rabbi Nathan: Text, Redaction and Interpretation* (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1998), 60, 251; and Ben-Eliyahu, “The Mount of Olives,” 55–63.

67. Mekhilta, *Pisha* 14 (ed. Lauterbach, 1:114); and SifreNum 84, 161.

68. Tanḥuma Buber, *Shemot* 10.

69. Jerome on Zeph 1.15–16 (quoted in F. E. Peters, *Jerusalem: The Holy City in the Eyes of Chroniclers, Visitors, Pilgrims and Prophets from the Days of Abraham to the Beginnings of Modern Times* [Princeton, N.J., 1985], 144).

70. Brief mention should also be made of the possibility that the growing centrality of figural art in synagogue decorations—and especially of the dominance of Temple vessels in these representations—is directly linked to the public display of cultic images in pagan and Christian religious celebrations of the period. “The late-antique surge in Jewish viewing of representations of the Temple *sancta*, especially in the public places of synagogues . . . served similar symbolic, even compensatory functions as did the viewing of sacred icons in pagan and Christian settings of worship and pilgrimage” (Steven Fraade, “The Temple as a Marker of Jewish Identity before and after 70 CE: The Role of the Holy Vessels in Rabbinic Memory and Imagination,” in *Jewish Identities in Antiquity: Studies in Memory of Menahem Stern*, ed. L. Levine and D. Schwartz [Tübingen, 2009], 261). I do not believe that it is fortuitous that the dramatic increase in the importance of the synagogue in general, and of the representation of Temple themes therein in particular, converge in this period to create a new kind of holy space that relocates the locus *sancta* in a fashion that is both eminently portable and independent of the *terra sancta*. See also Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue*, 228; Bezalel Narkiss, “The Image of Jerusalem in Art: Symbolic Representations of the Temple” (Hebrew), *Ha-universita* 13 (1968): 11–20; and Talgam, in this volume.

71. Ora Limor, “Reading Sacred Space: Egeria, Paula, and the Christian Holy Land,” in *De Sion exhibit lex et verbum domini de Hierusalem: Essays on Medieval Law, Liturgy, and Literature in Honour of Amnon Linder*, ed. Y. Hen (Turnhout, 2001), 11–12, 15.

72. Eusebius, *HE* 4.26.12 (Lake I, 1926, 393); 6.11.1–2 (Lake II, 1926, 37).

73. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy*, 90; and G. Bowman, “Mapping History’s Redemption,” 165.

74. P. W. L. Walker, *Holy City, Holy Places? Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Fourth Century* (Oxford, 1990), 81.

75. Georgia Frank, *The Memory of the Eyes: Pilgrims to Living Saints in Christian Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, Calif., 2000), 106.

76. Concerning the so-called visual revolution in Late Antiquity, see Patricia Cox Miller, “Visceral Seeing: The Holy Body in Late Antique Christianity,” *J ECS* 12.4 (2004): 391–411; and Jaś Elsner, *Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text* (Princeton, N.J., 2007), 22–26.

77. *Praef. in Lib. Paralip.*, quoted after E. D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire: A.D. 312–460* (Oxford, 1982), 94.

78. Andrew S. Jacobs, “The Most Beautiful Jewesses in the Land: Imperial Travel in the Early Christian Holy Land,” *Religion* 32.3 (2002): 213; G. Bowman, “Pilgrim Narratives of Jerusalem and the Holy Land,” 156; and Blake Leyerle, “Landscape as Cartography in Early Christian Pilgrimage Narratives,” *JAAR* 64.1 (1996): 128.

79. This function is already attested in Origen, *c. Celsum* 1.51.

80. Jaś Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés, introduction to *Voyages and Visions: Toward a Cultural History of Travel*, ed. Elsner and Rubiés (London, 1999), 17.

81. See also the letter to Macarius in 3.30.
82. The sheer number of texts quoted in this paper from the Pesikta raises interesting questions concerning the overall intent and context of this work. Passage PRK 18.5, from Bravde and Kapstein, 297.
83. This interesting term (מיני פרוש), which is not only an elegant paronomasia (sailor/heretic) but also a wonderfully apt description of Christian pilgrims, is unfortunately a hapax legomenon in rabbinic literature. See Lieberman, *Tosephta ke-peshuta* to *Berakhot*, 54 n. 84.
84. Lewis M. Barth, "The 'Three of Rebuke and Seven of Consolation' Sermons in the Pesikta de Rav Kahana," *JJS* 33.1/2 (1982): 503–15.
85. Marc G. Hirshman, "Pesikta de-Rav Kahana and Paideia," in *Higayon le-Yona: Festschrift for Yonah Frenkel*, ed. J. Levinson et al. (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 2007), 174–77. See also E. E. Urbach, "Heavenly and Earthly Jerusalem" [1968], repr. in *The World of the Sages: Collected Studies* (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1988), 376–91.
86. Jerome himself said that "the Jews think Jerusalem is to be restored to them, golden and adorned with gems." Jerome, *Comm. Jer.* 4:15 (trans. Millar, "Transformations of Judaism under Graeco-Roman Rule," 158). See also Wilken, *The Land Called Holy*, 143–48.
87. E. D. Hunt, "Holy Land Itineraries: Mapping the Bible in Late Roman Palestine," in *Space in the Roman World: Its Perception and Presentation*, ed. R. Talbert and K. Brodersen (Münster, 2004), 105.
88. Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony, "From Sacred Travel to Monastic Career: The Evidence of Late Antique Syriac Hagiography," *Adamantius* 16 (2010): 365.
89. Frank, *Memory of the Eyes*, 29–30.
90. Meir Bar-Ilan ("Miraculous Places in the Land of Israel in Ancient Times," in *Judaea and Samaria Studies: Proceedings of the Fifth Conference 1995* [Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1996], 229–39) explicitly connected this list to pilgrim itineraries. Ben-Eliyahu ("The Rabbinic Polemic," 276) also points out the striking parallel between this list and Egeria's journey. He suggests an ironic anti-pilgrimage reading of this list that "reduces to absurdity the attempt to identify sites where miracles took place, which was a common pagan, and later Christian practice" (ibid.). While possible, this reading does not take into account the function of the marvelous in travel writing.
91. Taylor (*Christians and the Holy Places*, 326) rightly distinguishes between these places, which are not holy in the same sense as the Christian sites. The "pilgrim" does not go there with the specific intention of venerating them; but if he passes by, he is obligated to say a memorial blessing.
92. Phlegon of Tralle (ca. 117–38 CE), *Book of Marvels*, ed. and trans. W. Hansen (Exeter, 1996); and James S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought* (Princeton, N.J., 1992), 92, 205. Jaś Elsner also remarks that "marvels and monuments which evoke famous heroes of the past are narrative features typical of travel-writing as early as Herodotus, but—for the first time in antique travel literature—they are employed here in a Christian dispensation"; Elsner, "The Itinerarium Burdigalense: Politics and Salvation in the Geography of Constantine's Empire," *JRS* 90 (2000): 194.
93. François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writings of History*, trans. J. Lloyd (Berkeley, Calif., 1988), 230.
94. Frank, *Memory of the Eyes*, 46.
95. Jaś Elsner, "From the Pyramids to Pausanias and Piglet: Monuments, Travel and Writing," in *Art and Text in Ancient Greek Culture*, ed. S. Goldhill and R. Osborne (Cambridge, 1994), 227.
96. A. Jacobs, *Remains of the Jews*, 128.
97. James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, Conn., 1990), 2, 4.
98. Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 31.5 (ed. Walsh, 2:130).
99. I want to thank Annette Reed for this suggestion. See also Elsner, "From the Pyramids," 37.

100. This double motivation is perplexing and deserves further attention.

101. As Maraval said, “[I]t was important for the pilgrim to bring away some part of the holiness, that he or she came to see and to touch; the ideal was of course to obtain a relic” (“The Earliest Phase of Christian Pilgrimage,” 73). See also the description of Egeria (8.3; ed. Wilkinson, 117) concerning the old sycamore tree, “planted by the patriarchs . . . and people who have something wrong with them pick its twigs, which do them good.”

102. Although there is considerable literature on this collection, it has yet to be studied from the historical and literary perspective of paradoxographical travel narratives. For recent attempts at a comprehensive reading and bibliography, see Dina Stein, “Things Seen from There Are Not Seen from Here” (Hebrew), *Jerusalem Studies in Hebrew Literature* 17 (1999): 9–32; and Reuven Kiperwasser, “Rabba bar bar Hana’s Voyages” (Hebrew), *Jerusalem Studies in Hebrew Literature* 22 (2008): 215–41.

103. Tanḥuma *Koraḥ* 11. There is also contained here (BBB 75a) a version of the R. Yoḥanan Sephoris narrative that we saw above.

104. For the importance of Lucian for an appreciation of (Babylonian) talmudic literature, see Daniel Boyarin, *Socrates and the Fat Rabbis* (Chicago, 2009), 193–242.

105. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy*, 114.

106. Trinh T. Minh-ha, “Other than Myself/My Other Self,” in *Travellers’ Tales: Narratives of Home and Displacement*, ed. G. Robertson et al. (London, 1994), 23.

107. Markus, “How on Earth,” 271.

108. Edward W. Said, “Representing the Colonized: Anthropology’s Interlocutors,” *Critical Inquiry* 15 (1989): 218.

CHAPTER 6

In memoriam: Émilienne Demougeot, a great scholar and generous host of a memorable evening in Montpellier; and *tibadel le-chaim arukim* Gisela Ripoll, who made my stay in Barcelona a unique pleasure.

1. Hagith Sivan, “Christianity,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Studies*, ed. A. Barchiesi and W. Scheidel (Oxford, 2010), 782–96.

2. Périclès-Pierre Johannou, *La législation impériale et la christianisation de l’Empire romain (311–476)* (Rome, 1972); and Pierre Chuvin, “Christianisation et résistance des cultes traditionnels: Approches actuelles et enjeux historiographiques,” in *Hellénisme et christianisme*, ed. M. Narcy and E. Rebillard (Villeneuve d’Ascq, 2004), 15–34. On Manichaeism, see Peter Brown, “The Diffusion of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire,” *JRS* 59.1/2 (1969): 92–103. Among Samuel N. C. Lieu’s numerous studies, see *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China: A Historical Survey* (Manchester, 1985). On legislation regarding Jews and Judaism, see Amnon Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation* (Detroit, 1987). On legal restrictions relating to the labor market and matrimony in the 330s, see Hagith Sivan, “Why Not Marry a Jew? Jewish-Christian Marital Frontiers in Late Antiquity,” in *Law, Society and Authority in Late Antiquity*, ed. R. W. Mathisen (Oxford, 2001), 208–19. On the demise of one such group, the followers of Mithras, once popular throughout the empire, see Robert Turcan, “Les motivations de l’intolérance chrétienne et la fin du mithraïsme au IV s. ap. J-C,” in *Actes du VII Congrès de la Fédération Internationale des Associations d’Études Classiques* (Budapest, 1984), 2:212–20; and Timothy D. Barnes, “Constantine’s Prohibition of Pagan Sacrifice,” *AJP* 105.1 (1984): 69–72. On the impact on temples and monumentality in general, see Richard P. C. Hanson, “The Transformation of Pagan Temples into Churches in the Early Christian Centuries,” *JSS* 23.2

(1978): 257–67; and Johannes Hahn, Stephen Emmel, and Ulrich Gotter, eds., *From Temple to Church: Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity* (Leiden, 2008).

3. Peter Brown, “Religious Coercion in the Later Roman Empire: The Case of North Africa,” *History* 48.164 (1963): 296.

4. Hagith Sivan, *Galla Placidia: The Last Roman Empress* (Oxford, 2011).

5. Annabel Wharton, “Erasure: Eliminating the Space of Late Ancient Judaism,” in *From Dura to Sepphoris: Studies in Jewish Art and Society in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. I. Levine and Z. Weiss (Portsmouth, R.I., 2000), 195–214; Helen Saradi, “The Dissolution of the Urban Space in the Early Byzantine Centuries: The Evidence of Imperial Legislation,” *Byzantina Symmeikta* 9.2 (1994): 295–308; Saradi, “Christian Attitudes toward Pagan Monuments in Late Antiquity and Their Legacy in Later Byzantine Centuries,” *DOP* 44 (1990): 47–61, esp. 48–50; Thomas Sizgorich, “‘Not Easily Were Stones Joined by the Strongest Bonds Pulled Asunder’: Religious Violence and Imperial Order in the Later Roman World,” *J ECS* 15.1 (2007): 75–101; and Bryan Ward-Perkins, “Reconfiguring Sacred Space: From Pagan Shrines to Christian Churches,” in *Die spätantike Stadt und ihre Christianisierung*, ed. G. Brands und H.-G. Severin (Wiesbaden, 2003), 285–90 (as well as other contributions in this volume).

6. The authenticity of the *Vita Porphyrii* has long been suspect. The arguments, especially those stemming from Paul Peeters’s publication of a Georgian version in 1941 (“La vie georgienne de Porphyre de Gaza,” *AB* 59 [1941]: 65–216), eleven years after the still-canonical edition of the Greek text by H. Grégoire and M.-A. Kugener (*Marc le diacre: Vie de Porphyre, évêque de Gaza* [Paris, 1930]), and from Frank R. Trombley’s criticism of Peeters (*Hellenic Religion and Christianization c. 370–529* [Leiden, 1995], 1:186–245), are summarized in Zeev Rubin, “Porphyrius of Gaza and the Conflict between Christianity and Paganism in Southern Palestine,” in *Sharing the Sacred: Religious Contacts and Conflict in the Holy Land*, ed. A. Kofsky and G. Stroumsa (Jerusalem, 1998), 31–66. Rubin (48) follows Peeters in postulating a Syriac common source of both surviving Greek and Syriac versions, once removed from an urtext also in Syriac. Such a chain of transmission, even before Peeters’s discovery, had already been surmised by the great F. Nau in his review of Grégoire and Kugener in *Revue de l’orient chrétien* 27 (1929): 422–44 (unknown to Rubin). On the basis of the abstract provided in the tenth-century MS P(arisinus) 1452, Nau postulated a “primitive” vita written around 424, by Mark but not in Gaza, and later “buffed” by additions in the margins aimed at providing details that Mark had omitted. The arguments for/against the authenticity of either version of the *VP* have been reexamined recently by Jeffrey W. Childers, “The Georgian Life of Porphyry of Gaza,” *StPatr* 35 (2001): 374–84; and see Childers, “The Life of Porphyry: Clarifying the Relationship of the Greek and the Georgian Version through the Study of New Testament Citations,” in *Transmission and Reception: New Testament Text-Critical and Exegetical Studies*, ed. J. W. Childers and D. C. Parker (Piscataway, N.J., 2006), 154–78—projecting a Greek original, of which a Syriac version became the source for the Georgian one. For insights into the editorial process, esp. the incorporation of citations and ideas derived from other authors as well as from the Bible, see the detailed analysis of *VP* 85–89 provided by Maddalena Scopello, “Julie, Manichéenne d’Antioche (d’après la Vie de Porphyre de Marc le Diacre, ch. 85–91),” *AntTard* 5 (1997): 187–209. I suspect that the matter will continue to be debated. In this essay, I refer to the Greek version, unless specified otherwise. Two English translations are available: G. F. Hill (Oxford, 1913; <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/porphyry.html>); and Claudia Rapp, in *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology*, ed. T. Head (New York, 2000), 53–75.

7. On Gaza in Late Antiquity and Porphyry’s presence, see Hagith Sivan, *Palestine in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2008), passim, with further references.

8. *VP* 17, attributing the harassment to the devil wishing to prevent Porphyry’s arrival to Gaza.

9. The collaboration between Porphyry and his Caesarean metropolitan obscured the former’s

close links with Jerusalem, which provide a key for comprehending his career in Gaza, below. The elaborate ceremonies and liturgy of Jerusalem in the 380s were recorded by Egeria; John Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels* (3rd ed.; Warminster, 1999).

10. Hagith Sivan, "On the Road to Bethlehem: Mary between Jerome and John of Jerusalem," in *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity*, ed. A. Cain and N. Lenski (Farnham, 2009), 369–81; Sivan, "Contesting Calendars: The 9th of Av and the Feast of the Theotokos," in *Pèlerinage et lieux saints dans l'antiquité et le Moyen Âge: Mélanges P. Maravel*, ed. B. Caseau et al. (Paris, 2006), 443–56, on prompting the court to issue a rule exiling Jerome from Palestine (ca. 395) and on appropriating the Jewish Ninth of Av day of universal lamentation over the fall of the Temple to promote the feast of Mary's nativity on August 15 in his combat with Jerome over territory and authority.

11. Porphyry's Constantinopolitan period provides interesting insights into the procedures behind the formulation of imperial constitutions, including private initiatives and the manipulation of court personnel.

12. In Grégoire and Kugener, *Marc le diacre*, 134, note the resemblance of the boy's narrative to that of Theodoret, *Historia religiosa* 2, where Julianus Sabas saved a single boy from a well. Another is clearly the biblical narrative of the three boys in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3). Mark may have deliberately conflated the two.

13. Peter Brown, "Art and Society in Late Antiquity," in *Age of Spirituality: A Symposium*, ed. K. Weitzmann (New York, 1980), 17–27, commented on the instrumental role of bishops as builders and providers of wages, especially in a region, like the Near East, "condemned by shortage of land and the rhythms of a Mediterranean climate to months of unemployment" (21). On the economic "mini-boom" as the most noticeable change in Gaza as a result of Porphyry's building activities, see Raymond Van Dam, "From Paganism to Christianity in Late Antique Gaza," *Viator* 16 (1985): 17. My thanks to the author for providing a copy.

14. On Julian's sponsorship and plans, see chap. 5 of my *Palestine in Late Antiquity*.

15. The coincidence of dates had been noted by Grégoire and Kugener, *Marc le diacre*, 137.

16. Pierre Chuvin, *A Chronicle of the Last Pagans* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990), 141, with reference to W. Dittenberger, ed., *Orientis Graeci inscriptiones selectae* (Leipzig, 1903–5), 2:610; and Marinus, *Life of Proclus* 19.

17. Although Mark placed the Julia narrative between his description of the building process of the Eudoxiana church and its dedication, I suspect that it best fits a sequence of events postdating the dedication. The Julia affair is clearly a self-contained unit that could have been inserted at several key points in the biography.

18. In the Greek version, Julia is a Manichee. In the Georgian, she is a "philosopher." On this episode, see Scopello, "Julie, Manichéenne d'Antioche," who highlights the judicial nature of the proceeding against Julia. See also Chuvin, "Christianisation et résistance," and Sivan, *Palestine in Late Antiquity*, passim. On Manichaeism and mission, see Brown, "The Diffusion of Manichaeism."

19. I suspect that here Mark exercised ingenuity and imagination in search of a counterpart to Julia. A young, rather than an old, woman, a local rather than an outsider, a pagan readily converted, Salphata's portrayal is too perfect a literary foil to inspire credibility.

20. One notable omission of Mark's narrative was an acknowledgment of Gaza's monastic hinterland, created by Hilarion in the mid-fourth century and sustained by a series of monks who pursued asceticism in the arid lands adjacent to the city; see Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony and Aryeh Kofsky, "Gaza's Monasticism in the Fourth–Sixth Centuries: From Anchoritic to Cenobitic," *Proche-Orient Chrétien* 50.1–2 (2000): 17–28. Nor does Mark refer to Gaza's port city, Maiumas, whose citizens opted

for conversion under Constantine. Mark also barely acknowledges the urban bishops who preceded Porphyry. The narrative required a clear slate to magnify Porphyry's efforts and achievements.

21. On the eventual transformation of the city, see my *Palestine in Late Antiquity*, chap. 8 and *passim*.

22. Richard W. Burgess, *The "Chronicle" of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana: Two Contemporary Accounts of the Final Years of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1993).

23. Steven Muhlberger, *The Fifth-Century Chroniclers: Prosper, Hydatius, and the Gallic Chronicler of 452* (Leeds, 1990), 207–9. For a list of the literature sprouting along the trail of the relics, see François Bovon, "The Dossier on Stephen, the First Martyr," *HTR* 96.3 (2003): 279–315.

24. Precisely like Mark's biography of Porphyry, the *Epistula Severi* had come under suspicion of forgery, vindicated, at least partially, with the discovery of new letters of Augustine. *Ep.* 12* contains a reference to a pugilist priest of Jamona, who has been plausibly identified with Severus. See Scott Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews* (Oxford, 1996), 9–15, for a survey of scholarship. Note also the comments of Bernard S. Bachrach in his review of Bradbury (*Speculum* 73 [1998]: 1167–69), regarding the discrepancy between the "universality" of the *Epistula's* audience and the specific addressee at its end and, above all, on the letter as an "ekphrasis of a historical tableau" or "pseudohistory." I would maintain, as I did regarding the *Vita Porphyrii*, that the core retains elements of historicity. On the widespread use of forgeries, see Gustave Barty, "Faux et fraudes littéraires dans l'antiquité chrétienne," *RHE* 32 (1936): 5–23, 275–302. Nor would the *Epistula*, if a forgery, stand alone in the context of Christian-Jewish polemics; see Bernhard Blumenkranz, *Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental, 430–1096* (Paris, 1960); Blumenkranz, *Les auteurs chrétiens latin du Moyen Âge sur les Juifs et le Judaïsme* (Paris, 1963); and Blumenkranz, *Juifs et chrétiens: Patristiques et Moyen Âge* (London, 1977). See also the exemplary analysis of the *Epistula's* authenticity and scope, as well as the date of the *altercatio* (below) by Émilienne Demougeot, "L'évêque Sévère et les Juifs de Minorque au Ve siècle," in *Majorque, Languedoc et Roussillon de l'antiquité à nos jours* (Montpellier, 1982), 13–34; and E. D. Hunt, "St. Stephen in Minorca: An Episode in Jewish-Christian Relations in the Early Fifth Century A.D.," *JTS* 33.1 (1982): 106–23.

25. Daniel Boyarin, "The Christian Invention of Judaism: The Theodosian Empire and the Rabbinic Refusal of Religion," *Representations* 85.1 (2004): 21–57, read the encyclical in tandem with Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30 (the narrative of Joseph and Comes), and with imperial laws on Jews and Judaism to elicit from both "a new [legal] status for the Jews of Christendom" as followers of a wrong religion (*religio*)" (43), a perversity of the right kind of religiosity. The laws have been conveniently assembled, with commentary by Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*.

26. Lea Roth-Gerson, *The Jews of Syria as Reflected in the Greek Inscriptions* (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 2001), esp. 83 n. 20, 254–56; and Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue* (New Haven, Conn., 2000).

27. On the Jews of Spain in Late Antiquity, see Hagith Sivan, "The Invisible Jews of Visigothic Spain," *REJ* 159.3–4 (2000): 369–85; David Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe*, vol. 1: *Italy (excluding the City of Rome), Spain and Gaul* (Cambridge, 1993); and Scott Bradbury, "The Jews of Spain c. 235–638," in *Cambridge History of Judaism*, ed. Katz (Cambridge, 2006), 4:508–18.

28. Brown, "Religious Coercion"; Friedrich Lotter, "Die Zwangsbekehrung der Juden von Menorca um 418 im Rahmen der Entwicklung des Judenrechts der Spätantike," *HZ* 242.2 (1986): 291–326, with a shorter English version as "The Forced Conversion of the Jewish Community of Minorca in 418 CE," in *Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, ed. D. Assaf (Jerusalem, 1986), 23–30; and Günter Stemberger, "Zwangstaufen von Juden im 4. bis 7. Jahrhundert: Mythos oder Wirklichkeit? in *Judentum-Ausblicke und Einsichten: Festgabe für Kurt Schubert*, ed. C. Thoma, G. Stemberger, and J. Maier (Frankfurt, 1993), 71–114, on the Minorca episode as an aberration before the seventh century.

29. The Balearic Islands were detached from the Spanish province of Carthaginiensis and acquired the status of a province ca. 370 CE. The rationale remains elusive, like that that had dictated the attachment of Mauretania Tingitana to the Spanish provinces; see Josep Amengual i Batle, “*Ubi pars graecorum est*: Medio milenio de historia relegada de las Baleares y las Pitiusas,” *Pyrenae* 36.2 (2005): 87–113, for an overview. My thanks to Gisela Ripoll for introducing me to this publication. The islands boasted an imperial dyeing establishment and weaving mills (A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602: A Social Economic and Administrative Survey* [Oxford, 1964], 1:836) and a few towns. Numismatic analysis of the finds from Pollentia (Maiorca), esp. the “ruthless recycling of all ‘Valentinian’ and ‘Theodosian’ bronzes still in circulation,” suggests that this town, at least, died a natural death, unrelated to events such as barbarian migrations, attacks, and appropriation; see H. B. Mattingly, “Roman Pollentia: Coinage and History,” in *Pollentia 3: Estudios de los materiales* (Palma de Mallorca, 1983), 248, for the citation. The *Epistula* projects a similar kind of undisturbed serenity.

30. Consentius’s correspondence with Augustine places him between 410 and 420 on Minorca. Whether he was a native or a newcomer is unclear. On clergy fleeing overseas, leaving behind their flock to the mercy of ruthless barbarians, while those who had been away by chance elected to stay away, not without wishing the best to coreligionists who had been unfortunately left behind at home, see the pithy comments of E. A. Thompson, *Romans and Barbarians: The Decline of the Western Empire* (Madison, Wisc., 1982), 179. Augustine knew that some Spanish bishops fled because their congregations had already melted away in flight, or had been massacred or shut up in besieged cities (ibid., 180). His own protégé, Orosius, “made his escape under a shower of barbarian stones and spears without any thought of his congregation to impede his wild rush through the surf to the waiting ship” (ibid.).

31. Text and translation below are from Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca*.

32. Stephen’s absence from the narrative is especially striking in view of the saint’s brief resuscitation through a vision of a ball of fire (*ES* 20.6), which Severus was uncertain how to interpret: “In truth, whether that which had been glimpsed had been an angel or Saint Stephen himself, even now remains unclear” (*ES* 20.12). The precise connection between the relics and Severus’s actions is difficult to establish. Sermons like Augustine’s twenty-eighth, which berates an impious and murderous synagogue for stoning God-loving Stephen, who, in turn, prays for them, could inspire an exegesis that called not for mercy but for retaliation.

33. It is impossible to determine the size of the Christian community at that point. The *Epistula* refers to monks but not to a monastery. Excavations have revealed four churches, none apparently dating before the end of the fifth century, and one with mosaics that display close affinity with those of the synagogue at Hamman Lif, near Carthage; see Pedro de Palol, “Basilicas paleocristianas en la isla de Menorca, Baleares,” in *Festschrift Friedrich Gerke: Kunsthistorische Studien*, ed. J. A. Schmoll (Baden-Baden, 1962), 39–53. Later, Palol linked these churches and their mosaics to Jews and to Palestine, a venue allegedly opened through the conversion, an unlikely proposition supported also by José M. Blázquez, “Relations between Hispania and Palestine in the Late Roman Empire,” *Assaph* 3 (1998): 163–78. See also Purificación Ubric Rabaneda, *La iglesia en la Hispania del siglo V* (Granada, 2004), 197–209. My thanks to the author for kindly sending me a copy of her book.

34. Whether Severus’s lost *commonitorium* may be identified with the so-called *De Altercatione Synagogaë et Ecclesiae Dialogus* remains an open question. For a review, see Carlos del Valle, “La carta enciclica del obispo Severo de Menorca,” in *La controversia Judeocristiana en España (desde los orígenes hasta el siglo XIII)*, ed. C. del Valle Rodríguez (Madrid, 1998), 73–76. See also Demougeot, “L’évêque Sévère,” on the *altercatio* as a seventh-century document using the *epistula*.

35. The interdependence of the female body and agrarian metaphors has a long literary ancestry

of shaping gender perceptions and sexual differentiation; see Page duBois, *Sowing the Body: Psychoanalysis of Ancient Representations of Women* (Chicago, 1988).

36. Ross S. Kraemer questions the authenticity of these female figures, highlighting the conventionality behind their alleged insubordination. See her “Jewish Women’s Resistance to Christianity in the Early Fifth Century: The Account of Severus, Bishop of Minorca,” *J ECS* 17.4 (2009): 635–65. I am grateful to the author for furnishing me with a prepublication copy.

37. Western laws imposed restrictions on the judicial capacity of bishops, denying them jurisdiction in criminal matters (*CTh* 16.2.23 of 376 CE), although the African church claimed criminal jurisdiction over clerics at the council of Carthage of 397 (Leslie Dossey, “Judicial Violence and the Ecclesiastical Courts in Late Antique North Africa,” in *Law, Society and Authority in Late Antiquity*, ed. Mathisen, 98–114); *CTh* 1.27.2 and 1.27.3 of 408 CE allowed bishops to judge only civil cases and only when both parties agreed, while the decisions were to be implemented by imperial officials. Most revealing are two constitutions: *CTh* 16.11.1 of 399 CE restricted episcopal jurisdiction to religious affairs; and *CTh* 16.5.52 of 412 CE, as well as the acts of the Council of Carthage, indicates that even then, the secular authorities were entrusted with performing any necessary coercion, such as the closure of sanctuaries and the transfer of their properties to the catholic establishment.

38. Josep Vilella Masana and P. Maymó i Capdevila, “Religion and Policy in the Coexistence of Romans and Barbarians in Hispania (409–589),” *Romanobarbarica* 17 (2000–2002): 193–236.

39. Michael Kulikowski, “Fronto, the Bishops and the Crowd: Episcopal Justice and Communal Violence in Fifth-Century Tarragona,” *EME* 11.4 (2002): 295–320. On Consentius and his style, see Jules Wankenne, “La correspondance de Consentius avec saint Augustin,” in *Les lettres de saint Augustin découvertes par Johannes Divjak* (Paris, 1983), 225–42.

40. Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (2nd ed.; Berkeley, Calif., 2000), 467; and Raymond Van Dam, “‘Sheep in Wolves’ Clothing’: The Letters of Consentius to Augustine,” *JEH* 37.4 (1986): 515–35.

41. Johannes Divjak, ed., *Lettres 1*–29**, Bibliothèque augustiniennne, Oeuvres de Saint Augustin 46B (Paris, 1987).

42. For laws on Jews and Judaism, see Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*. On imperial laws on religious affairs (*CTh*, esp. book 16), see R. Delmaire, *Les lois religieuses des empereurs romains de Constantin à Théodose II (312–438)*, vol. 1: *Code Théodosien Livre XVI* (Paris, 2005). Note the absence of imperial authorities, such as the provincial governor (*praeses insularum Balaearum*), from the account, highlighted by *ES* 24.2, which refers to Litorius, father of Artemisia, as an erstwhile governor.

43. A vexed question; see Jacques Fontaine, “Une polémique stylistique instructive dans la ‘lettre encyclique’ de Sévère de Minorque,” in *Eulogia: Mélanges offerts à Antoon A. R. Bastiaensen*, ed. G. J. M. Bartelink, A. Hilhorst, and C. H. Kneepkens (Steenbrugge, 1991), 119–35.

44. See James J. O’Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography* (New York, 2005), 144, for the quotation.

45. With Wankenne, “La correspondance de Consentius,” 234. On the bitter rivalry between Jerome and Epiphanius, on the one hand, and John of Jerusalem, see Sivan, “On the Road to Bethlehem.”

46. Cf. the employment of Stephen in Uzalis, where bishop Evodius, capitalizing on Donatist attachment to every bit of dust that came from the Holy Land (Augustine, *Ep.* 52.2), housed Stephen’s relics in a regained Donatist basilica to mark the renewed unity of the congregation, *de miraculis Sancti Stephani* 1.7, with Brown, “Religious Coercion,” 293.

47. See, among recent evaluations, Paula Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism* (New York, 2008), for an irenic view of Judaism that reflects neither Augustine’s familiarity with real Jews nor an interest per se in contemporary Judaism but rather an overarching necessity to come to terms with the complex relationship between his own Manichee past and his

somewhat incongruous installation as the chief spokesperson against Manichaeism. See also Hagith Sivan, “Canonizing Law in Late Antiquity: Legal Constructs of Judaism in the Theodosian Code,” in *Homer, the Bible, and Beyond: Literary and Religious Canons in the Ancient World*, ed. M. Finkelberg and G. Stroumsa (Leiden, 2002), 213–25.

CHAPTER 7

I would like to thank the dedicated editors of this volume, Annette Reed and Natalie Dohrmann, as well as the anonymous reviewers for the Press and my young colleague and friend Yoni Moss, for their invaluable comments and suggestions.

1. Timothy E. Gregory, *Vox Populi: Popular Opinion and Violence in the Religious Controversies of the Fifth Century A.D.* (Columbus, Ohio, 1979); Friedhelm Winkelmann, “Der Laós und die kirchlichen Kontroversen im frühen Byzanz,” in *Volk und Herrschaft im frühen Byzanz*, ed. F. Winkelmann (Berlin, 1991), 132–53; Neil McLynn, “Christian Controversy and Violence in the Fourth Century,” *Kodai* 3 (1992): 15–44; Richard Lim, “Religious Disputation and Social Order in Late Antiquity,” *Historia* 44.2 (1995): 204–31; and Johannes Hahn, *Gewalt und religiöser Konflikt: Studien zu den Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Christen, Heiden und Juden im Osten des römischen Reiches (von Konstantin bis Theodosius II)* (Berlin, 2004).

2. Notable in that regard is Brent D. Shaw’s recent massive study, *Sacred Violence: African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine* (Cambridge, 2011). Initial questions were raised, along with new insights, in Harold Drake, “Lambs into Lions: Explaining Early Christian Intolerance,” *P&P* 153 (1996): 3–36. But now we are blessed with a new crop of studies on the topic: Michael Gaddis, *There Is No Crime for Those Who Have Christ: Religious Violence in the Christian Roman Empire* (Berkeley, Calif., 2005); Harold A. Drake, ed., *Violence in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Practices* (Aldershot, 2006); and Drake, “Intolerance, Religious Violence, and Political Legitimacy in Late Antiquity,” *JAAR* 79.1 (2011): 193–235.

3. Cyril’s election to office, reported by Socrates, *HE* 7.7, involved a short but violent power struggle, as seen in his bold actions immediately following his election: his aggressive attitude toward the Alexandrian Novatian community and his interference in secular matters, exceeding the powers allotted to ecclesiastical officials. See Susan Wessel, “Socrates’ Narrative of Cyril of Alexandria’s Episcopal Election,” *JTS* 52.1 (2001): 98–104; and her *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy* (Oxford, 2004), 15–22.

4. On the Jews in Eusebius’s *History*, see Robert Grant’s *Eusebius as a Historian* (Oxford, 1980), 97–113, followed by Harold W. Attridge and Gohei Hata, eds., *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism* (Detroit, 1992). See also my “Jews and Judaism in Early Church Historiography: The Case of Eusebius of Caesarea (Preliminary Observations and Examples),” in *Jews in Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures*, ed. R. Bonfil et al. (Leiden, 2012), 799–828.

5. *The Chronicle of John Bishop of Nikiu*, chaps. 84, 87–103, trans. from Zotenberg’s Ethiopic version by R. H. Charles (London, 1916), chaps. 84, 79–85, 100–102. There are conflicting views as to the possible sources of the traditions pertaining to the Alexandrian riots found in John of Nikiu’s *Chronicle*. Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 34, claims in passing that John of Nikiu’s report rests on Socrates’ narrative, though it tends to divert from it; Edward J. Watts, *Riot in Alexandria: Tradition and Group Dynamics in Late Antique Pagan and Christian Communities* (Berkeley, Calif., 2010), 209, claims that John’s account might rest upon other traditions, too.

6. On this matter, I tend to follow Johannes Hahn’s meticulous study of the 392 riots in

Alexandria leading to the destruction of the local Serapeum. Hahn establishes a strong case for favoring Socrates' account of that episode; see his "The Conversion of the Cult Statues: The Destruction of the Serapeum in 392 A.D. and the Transformation of Alexandria into a 'Christ-Loving City,'" in *From Temple to Church: Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity*, ed. J. Hahn et al. (Leiden, 2008), 335–65. It is probable that Socrates' account on the Jewish-Christian clash in Alexandria is based on two sources: the official written complaints of Orestes to the Theodosian court; and the oral account told to him by Adamantius, the Jewish physician who fled or migrated to Constantinople, where he was converted to Christianity by Bishop Atticus before returning to his hometown (*HE* 7.14).

7. Thomas Sizgorich, *Violence and Belief in Late Antiquity: Militant Devotion in Christianity and Islam* (Philadelphia, 2008), 4–5. A salient aspect of his study is the place of militant piety in the formulation of narrative in the articulation of individual and communal identities.

8. On Hypatia's life and death, see, in extenso, Maria Dzielska, *Hypatia of Alexandria* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995). Hypatia's life and tragic death ultimately caught the interest of contemporary writers and occupied the imagination of later, particularly Victorian, English political activists and authors; see Simon Goldhill, *Victorian Culture and Classical Antiquity: Art, Opera, Fiction, and the Proclamation of Modernity* (Princeton, N.J., 2011), 202–9.

9. On method, see Alun Manslow, *Narrative and History* (London, 2007), 16–28, 90–93.

10. Fergus Millar, "Christian Emperors, Christian Church and the Jews of the Diaspora in the Greek East, CE 379–450," *JJS* 55.1 (2004): 4, 7; for more instances of Christian rivalry and violence against the Jews, see 15–23. The essay has been reprinted in Fergus Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, the East*, ed. H. Cotton and G. M. Rogers (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2006), 3:457–86; see there also "The Jews of the Graeco-Roman Diaspora between Paganism and Christianity, AD 312–438," 3:432–56.

11. Here is yet another view of Diaspora Jews' religious conduct on Sabbath. The generalizing tone used by Socrates might have had other aims; still, the kernel of Socrates' observation, likely based on local information that we have no reason to doubt, should be compared with, if not negated by, the contemporaneous account by Synesius (ca. 407 CE) of a countermanding case of careful observance of the Sabbath—in this case, during a sea journey (see Synesius, *ep. 5 apud* Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 3 vols. [Jerusalem, 1974–84], 3:48–58; and Millar, "Christian Emperors," 21). On "normative" Judaism in the late antique Diaspora, see my remark in Bonfil et al., eds., *Jews in Byzantium*, 36–37.

12. The nature of these new regulations promulgated by Orestes is not clear, though it is well known that these shows attracted many people and were condemned by rhetoricians, bishops, and rabbis. That the present Jews, according to Socrates, opposed these regulations might mean that Orestes wished to restrain them or limit their public scope, which was probably at its peak on Saturday, for on the Lord's day (Sunday), all spectacles were prohibited by imperial law; cf. *CTh* 2.8.23; 2.8.25 from 399 and 409 CE.

13. On Cyril of Alexandria, one of the most politically active and influential church fathers of his age, see the introductory survey by Norman Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria* (London, 2000). See also Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*; Stephen J. Davis, *The Early Coptic Papacy: The Egyptian Church and Its Leadership in Late Antiquity* (Cairo, 2004), 63–76; and Watts, *Riot in Alexandria*, 190–215.

14. Socrates, *HE* 7.7: "Cyril came into possession of the episcopate, with greater power than Theophilus had ever exercised. For from that time, the bishopric of Alexandria went beyond the limits of its sacerdotal functions, and assumed the administration of secular matters."

15. Socrates' emphasis on the activity of mobs as a leading feature of this bloody rivalry reflects communal cohesiveness (Jewish and Christian), witnessing, defending, or attacking with militia-like

forces, at times depending also on numbers mobilized from outside, in addition to guerrilla tactics. It is reminiscent of the pagan crowds of locals as well as pilgrims and visiting students, who took part in the bloody riots led by the philosopher Olympus, provoked by Theophilus, and the local bishop's humiliating parade against pagan worship, all of which led to the Christian siege of the Serapeum and finally to its destruction in 392 CE; see Socrates' detailed account, *HE* 5, 16; and Hahn's ("The Conversion of the Cult Statues") detailed appraisal of the episode. On the atmosphere surrounding that decisive moment in Alexandrian history, see Christopher Haas's comments in *Alexandria in Late Antiquity* (Baltimore, 1997): "At any rate, devoted pilgrims, as well as long time local worshippers of the god would have provided an enthusiastic body of defenders for the threatened shrine" (165). That at least some part of the local Jewish community witnessed and internalized these events is evidenced by their own bloody encounter with the Christians. On the Christian mobs acting in Alexandria against the Jews and pagans alike and on the way they were mobilized by Cyril, see Dzielska, *Hypatia of Alexandria*, 83–100; and Edward J. Watts, *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria* (Berkeley, Calif., 2006), 187–203.

16. This is rather exaggerated. See Robert L. Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind: A Study of Cyril of Alexandria's Exegesis and Theology* (New Haven, Conn., 1971), 56–58.

17. By then, the emperor was only thirteen years old. Both leaders filing their complaints assumed that they would receive the court's support. Cyril might have counted on a sympathetic ear in Aurelianus, who was a longtime collaborator with Theophilus of Alexandria in the ousting and exiling of John Chrysostom from his see in Constantinople, and who in the same year, when hostilities broke out in Alexandria, was reappointed *Praefectus Praetorio Orientis* for a second term (414–416 CE); see s.v. Aurelianus 3, in J. R. Martindale, ed., *PLRE* vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1980), 199. For more on Aurelianus's career, convictions, and policies, see Alan Cameron and Jacqueline Long, *Barbarians and Politics at the Court of Arcadius* (Berkeley, Calif., 1993), 71–84, who stress the possible deep involvement of Aurelianus in contemporary imperial anti-Jewish legislation (78). It is no surprise that during the early stages of Cyril's term in office, the slowly deteriorating power and image of the Jewish patriarch, a long-standing symbol of Jewish autonomous communal cohesion, received its final blow; cf. *CTh* 16.8.22 (October 20, 415). Note the proximity of the events in Alexandria in 414 CE to the mass conversion of the Minorcan Jewish community in 418 CE; see Scott Bradbury, ed. and trans., *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews* (Oxford, 1996); and Ross S. Kraemer, "Jewish Women's Resistance to Christianity: The Account of Severus, Bishop of Minorca," *J ECS* 17.4 (2009): 635–65. See also Sivan, in this volume.

18. On the evolving nature of the contact between bishops and the imperial court, see Claudia Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Berkeley, Calif., 2005), 262–66.

19. Peter Brown, *Power and Persuasion: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison, Wisc., 1992), 116; and Watts, *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria*, 198–202, who (202–3) contends that Hypatia's murder was a grave mistake on Cyril's part; while Hypatia's views were not anti-Christian in essence (and some of her leading students such as Synesius of Cyrene were Christians), her demise ushered in the anti-Christian Iamblichian school of thought—the presence and impact of which remained unchecked for a long time.

20. The attempt to decipher the traits of the representation of the Judaeo-Christian episode of violence, as it was preserved in the historians' and chroniclers' accounts, resembles the treatment of later accounts on the "sequel" to the events described here; see Hypatia's murder, offered by E. Watts, "The Murder of Hypatia: Acceptable or Unacceptable Violence," in *Violence in Late Antiquity*, ed. Drake, 333–43.

21. Harold Idris Bell, "Anti-Semitism in Alexandria," *JRS* 31 (1941): 17.

22. Victor Tcherikover, ed., *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), 1:98. Cf. Cecil Roth's appraisal of another incident described by Socrates (*HE* 7.16), whereby Jews were accused of scourging and killing a Christian child during a celebration in Inmestar (a small town not far from Chalcis in Syria). See his "The Feast of Purim and the Blood Accusation," *Speculum* 8.4 (1933): 522.

23. Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity*, 295–316; Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 33–45; Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind*, 54–68; and Gaddis, *There Is No Crime*, 220–22.

24. It may be assumed that Cyril's actions against the Novatianist Church were what partly triggered Socrates' criticism of Cyril. Concerning Socrates' possible Novatian leanings, which have been subject to an ongoing debate, see the concise analysis by Martin Wallraff, "Socrates Scholasticus on the History of Novatianism," *StPatr* 29 (1997): 170–77.

25. See Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind*, 59–68, where he discusses Cyril's deep animosity toward the Jews, as expressed in his exegetical and apologetical work. See also, esp. in his Easter *Festal Letters*, invectives against the Jews, John A. McGuckin, "Cyril of Alexandria: Bishop and Pastor," in *The Theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria: A Critical Appreciation*, ed. T. G. Weinandy and D. A. Keating (London, 2003), 222–31.

26. So according to Socrates, *HE* 7.13, 18. Regarding the Alexandrian population, two operative estimates have been offered, the figures ranging from 200,000 to 600,000. The size of the Christian and Jewish communities within these overall estimates is extremely difficult to determine, for the sources are too scanty. See Laurens E. Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies: The Urban Elites of Third-Century Roman Egypt* (Leiden, 2006), 22–35 (on the data and possible models pertaining to the assessment of the demography of late Roman Egypt and their inherent problems). McGuckin, "Cyril of Alexandria," highlights the fact that the substantial Jewish presence in Alexandria placed Cyril under great pressure; see also Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 39–45. As for the size of the Christian community, see Norman Russell, "The Life of Theophilus of Alexandria," in *Theophilus of Alexandria*, ed. Russell (London, 2007), 4–10, who, following Christopher Haas, claims that toward the end of the fourth century, Christians were the majority in Alexandria and on the rise.

27. Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity*, 301–2.

28. *Ibid.*, 302.

29. *Ibid.*, 309–16.

30. See Richard A. Layton, *Didymus the Blind and His Circle in Late-Antique Alexandria: Virtue and Narrative in Biblical Scholarship* (Urbana, Ill., 2004), 24–26, 135–37.

31. The possible cultural and social makeup of that community was recently sketched by Millar, "Christian Emperors," 20–22, who seems to accept the possibility that the sheer size of the Jewish community was enough to generate confidence. In this regard, Wessel's study ventures slightly further afield to address Jewish conduct in the unfolding events. Though admitting the possibility that the Jews' malevolence had a "meager basis in fact" and attempting to contextualize the facts within the spate of the local contemporary Christian (especially Cyril's) animosity toward the Jews, she nonetheless tends to subject her appraisal to the topos-like mood that governs Socrates' narrative. In the same vein, the most recent mention of the violent episode at hand by Guy Stroumsa, though not as much addressing the details of the event itself, attempts to contextualize it in Alexandrian hostility (pagan and Christian) toward the Jews from much earlier on; cf. his "Jewish Survival in Late Antique Alexandria," in *Jews in Byzantium*, ed. Bonfilis et al., 263–65.

32. The decade or so after this episode was rampant with anti-Jewish incidents. After the events in Alexandria came the coerced conversion of the Jews in Minorca in 418, followed in 419–422 by a series of attacks on synagogues in Palestine and Arabia led by zealous monks headed by the Syrian Bar

Sauma (though the traditions pertaining to the latter are hagiographic in nature) and culminating in the demise of the office of the patriarchate in 429 (*CTh* 16.8.29).

33. In John of Nikiu's version, it is stated explicitly that following Cyril's act of retaliation, "Orestes the prefect was unable to render [the Jews] any help" (Charles, ed., *Chronicle of John Bishop of Nikiu*, chap. 84, p. 102).

34. The doubts have been voiced by Philip Blaudeau (whom I deeply thank for a recent fruitful discussion), in "Puissance ecclésiastique, puissance sociale: Le siège alexandrine au prisme du *Code Théodosien* et des *Constitutions Sirmondienne*," in *Droit, religion et société dans le Code Théodosien*, ed. J.-J. Aubert and P. Blanchard (Geneva, 2009), 98–100. Concerning the episode's lack of resonance in the Theodosian Code, Blaudeau, along with others, contests the relevance of the law pertaining to the *parabalani* (hospital attendants, turned into a local militia in the service of the bishop) to the events. Blaudeau's doubts concerning Socrates' account can be slightly allayed if we consider that Socrates is corroborated by the later account found in the *Chronicle* of John Bishop of Nikiu, which may have been based on different traditions.

35. As, e.g., in D. L. Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot* (Berkeley, Calif., 2001).

36. A. Goldbacher, ed., *S. Aureli Augustini: Epistulae*, CSEL 33 (Vindobonae, 1897), 427–35, 506–13.

37. It is important to emphasize that the twelfth *Sirmondian Constitution* was just about to be publicly promulgated (June 5, 408, in Carthage) right after the breakout of hostilities in Calama (June 1), which complicated Possidius's position. For comments on Augustine's evaluation of these incidents within his attitudes toward rival religious forces (Jews, pagans, and heretics), see James J. O'Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography* (New York, 2005), 179–90.

38. Their reluctance to take action is manifested in the exchange between Nectarius (a local important Christian) and Augustine, *Ep.* 91.

39. See the detailed and insightful account of the Calama riots, their aftermath, and impact on North African contemporary Christian circles in Erika T. Hermanowicz, "Catholic Bishops and Appeals to the Imperial Court: A Legal Study of the Calama Riots in 408," *J ECS* 12.4 (2004): 481–521; and, in a more elaborate form, in her *Possidius of Calama: A Study of the North African Episcopate* (Oxford, 2008), 156–87. See also Shaw, *Sacred Violence*, 251–59.

40. The Calama incident betrays specific affinities to the Alexandrian riots, but it was not the only outbreak of its kind then in North Africa or, for that matter, in the western empire. Cf. the clashes in Madauros in Shaw, *Sacred Violence*, 239–43, and the events documented and analyzed by Michele R. Salzman, "Rethinking Pagan-Christian Violence," in *Violence in Late Antiquity*, ed. Drake, 273–78, 283–85.

41. Hermanowicz, *Possidius of Calama*, 164–65. The Christian attitude toward civic celebrations was ambivalent, accepted, or condemned in a variety of ways; see Maijastina Kahlos, "Pompa diabolici: The Grey Area of Urban Festivals in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries," *Collections Latomus* 287 (2005): 467–83, and in an abridged form in her *Debate and Dialogue: Christian and Pagan Cultures c. 360–430* (Aldershot, 2007), 129–32.

42. Shaw, *Sacred Violence*, 239–43. Christian-pagan competition over the public sphere was fierce. A fine example of Christian appropriation of the civic space in Constantinople from John Chrysostom's days has recently been put forward; see Nathanael Andrade, "The Processions of John Chrysostom and the Contested Spaces of Constantinople," *J ECS* 18 (2010): 161–89. See also Sivan, in this volume.

43. In the parallel case, the overzealous bishop, Possidius of Calama, attempted to implement an imperial rescript before its official promulgation (in Carthage on June 5, 408). The rescript (*Sirm.*

12) threatened to penalize any neglect by the local senate to enforce anti-pagan measures. This act of hubris no doubt intensified the animosity between Possidius and the Calama municipal leaders. On the Alexandrian band of Christian thugs, the *parabalani* in service of local zealot enterprises, see Glen W. Bowersock, “Parabalani: A Terrorist Charity in Late Antiquity,” *Anabases* 12 (2010): 45–54.

44. On the North African holy fighters, see Shaw, *Sacred Violence*, 222–47. It is not entirely clear whether one can draw direct parallels between the public thuggish behavior in Alexandria and that manifested in others places in North Africa.

45. On information transmission at the time, see Claire Sotinel, “How Were Bishops Informed? Information Transmission across the Adriatic Sea in Late Antiquity,” in *Travel, Communication and Geography in Late Antiquity: Sacred and Profane*, ed. L. Ellis and F. L. Kinder (Aldershot, 2004), 63–72.

46. Cf. Salzman’s insights in “Rethinking Pagan-Christian Violence,” 283–85: “Our [North African] sources share the view that it was the pagans who consistently used violence against people. Although Christians overturned pagan idols and shrines, they did not attack people. Only pagans did this” (283). Her observations do not square with the emerging Alexandrian picture.

47. Upholding the peace and tranquillity in the world was also one of the main objectives and ideals attributed to the church in Socrates’ narrative; cf. the closing chapter of his *History*.

48. As recently surmised, it was known in some form to the editors of the Theodosian Code compiled in Constantinople. See John. F. Matthews, *Laying Down the Law: A Study of the Theodosian Law* (New Haven, Conn., 2000), 151–55, who demonstrates how extracts from the *CTh* 16.5.46 drew upon the text of the fourteenth *Sirmondian Constitution*. This does not mean that the editors of the Code were acquainted in any straightforward way with the collection of the *Sirmondian Constitutions* but rather that “they found in their own sources . . . texts that were also included . . . in the *Sirmondian Constitutions*” (127 n. 20). My contention is that word about the content or the spirit of the fourteenth *Sirmondian Constitution* might well have reached Alexandria.

49. With all apparent differences between east and west, both parts of the empire maintained a unified rule of law. On the differing circumstances, see Tony Honoré, *Law in the Crisis of Empire 379–455 AD: The Theodosian Dynasty and Its Quaestors* (Oxford, 1998), 23–25. On the sense of a unified code of law, see Hagith Sivan, *Galla Placidia: The Last Roman Empress* (Oxford, 2011), 125–27.

50. Translation from C. Pharr, *The Theodosian Code* (2nd ed.; Union, N.J., 2001), 484. In the following paragraph, the imperial authorities advocate that such crimes in the future must be punished with a capital sentence.

51. I am inclined to pursue this line of argument, for it explains Cyril’s arrogance calling the leaders of the Jews and “threatening them with the utmost severities” (*diēpeilēse*). On the bishop’s assertive actions in matters of imperial law, see the observations by Honoré, *Law in the Crisis of Empire*, 4–6.

52. Cf. earlier laws by Theodosius I (December 393) preserved only in *Codex Justinianus* 1.9.7 and by Arcadius, *CTh* 16.8.12 (July 397). Socrates tacitly refers to this law when he uses in his narrative the words found in the opening statement of the law: “If it should appear that any places are frequented . . . by the Jews and are called by the name of synagogues”; note that according to the Armenian version of Socrates (R. W. Thomson, trans. and annotation, *The Armenian Adaptation of the Ecclesiastical History of Socrates Scholasticus*, “*The Shorter Socrates*” [Leuven, 2001], 196), Cyril “destroyed their houses of prayer.”

53. Wessel’s attempt to place the tension between the Jews and Cyril in the context of a linear set of episodes of past Jewish opposition to local elected bishops (Athanasius and Peter) is slightly artificial (*Cyril of Alexandria*, 37–38). For it can as easily be argued that, in those instances, the Jews were drawn into the conflict rhetorically, as is evident in the case of the Arians and their supporters who

vehemently opposed Athanasius. Indeed, in some of his utterances, Athanasius described his Arian opponents as Judaizers; so for him, such an alliance—factual or not—was more than natural, in which case the eruption of violence in early fifth-century Alexandria could be seen as an episode *sui generis*. By all measures, the agitated social and religious atmosphere in which Theophilus and Cyril operated was immensely different from the one in which Athanasius and Peter operated.

54. The Alexandrian riots of ca. 414—the most deadly clash between Jews and Christians to date—were a unique moment in the deteriorating relations between Jews and Christians. They also mark the nadir of a gradual process of the marginalization of the Jews and their status in the imperial law codes; see Amnon Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation* (Detroit, 1987), 67–86.

55. Theresa Urbainczyk, “Observations on the Differences between the Church Histories of Socrates and Sozomen,” *Historia* 46.3 (1997): 366: “Socrates has far less emphasis (than Sozomen) on Jews. This changes a bit in book 7, the last book, where he records anecdotes which generally reflect badly on them. . . . [T]hey are outrageously cruel . . . deceitful and greedy . . . and they are gullible. . . . The increase in details about the Jews in the last book is interesting. Socrates may have been responding to criticism that he in his earlier books, unlike Eusebius, had no details on the Jews.” We find the same view in the otherwise comprehensive study on Socrates’ *History*, Martin Wallraff, *Der Kirchenhistoriker Sokrates: Untersuchungen zu Geschichtsdarstellung, Methode und Person* (Göttingen, 1997), 123: “Nicht sehr viel zu sagen ist auch über die Juden. . . . Sokrates bei seinem Lesern keine eingehenden Kenntnisse über das Judentum voraussetzt und wohl auch selbst nicht über solche verfügt.” More recently, Hartmut Leppin has voiced similar claims in “The Church Historians (I): Socrates, Sozomenus, and Theodoretus,” in *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity: Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.*, ed. G. Marasco (Leiden, 2003), 252–53. Reflecting on the scanty mention of Jews in the *Histories*, he concludes: “The topic seems to have lost its importance in Church historiography.” Recently, Peter van Nuffelen, though devoting a more substantial discussion to the topic, surmises that the role of the Jews in the presentation of history by Sozomen and Socrates has manifestly changed from the time of Eusebius, the two most prominent elements in their presentation being the conversion of the Jews and their stereotypical image; see van Nuffelen, *Un héritage de Paix et de Piété: Étude sur les histories ecclésiastiques de Socrate et de Sozomène* (Leuven, 2004), 401.

56. For a more promising line of investigation, see E. I. Argov, “A Church Historian in Search of Identity: Aspects of Early Byzantine Palestine in Sozomen’s *Historia Ecclesiastica*,” *ZAC* 9 (2006): 367–96.

57. This same impression concerning the marginality of this episode in the broader historical picture of Egyptian Christianity seems to have left its mark on current scholarship; see Davis, *The Early Coptic Papacy*; and Watts, *Riot in Alexandria*, who refer to our incident only in passing.

58. Given the approximate date of the publication of the *History* (ca. 439), was it a coincidence that Socrates composed his treatise while the Theodosian Code was being formed and published by jurists in Theodosius’s II court? Could we postulate that his work was to serve or be received by the public readership as a sort of historical companion to the emerging code? My conjecture is not meant to revive the dubious claim by Glenn F. Chesnut, *The First Christian Histories* (Paris, 1977), 169, that Theodorus the “holy man of God,” to whom Socrates dedicated his work, is to be identified with Theodorus the *magister memoriae* of Theodosius II, commissioned by the emperor to head the team of jurists that prepared the Theodosian Code. However, my argument goes against the grain of accepted views about Socrates’ distinct disinterest in legal matters and considerations, recently reiterated in Henriette Harich-Schwarzbauer, *Hypatia: Die spätantiken Quellen—Eingeleitet, kommentiert und interpretiert* (Bern, 2011), 170.

59. *CTh* 2.8.26 (the quotation is taken from the fragment preserved in the *Breviarium*, 2.8.3),

ed. T. Mommsen and Paulus M. Meyer, *Theodosiani Libri XVI (cum Constitutionibus Sirmondianis)* (Berlin, 1905), 1/2: 89. Cf. *CTh* 16.8.20 (ed. Linder), 262–67.

60. In a wider cultural and rhetorical context, Socrates' portrayal of the Alexandrian Jews contrasted them starkly with the much desired Hellenic ideal of *arete* (moral excellence)—an ideal valued in elite Christian (John Chrysostom; Isidore of Pelusium), pagan (Julian; Libanius), and rabbinic circles. On Isidore of Pelusium's (a contemporary of Cyril) attitude toward these spectacles, see Richard Lim, "Isidore of Pelusium on Roman Public Spectacles," *StPatr* 29 (1997): 66–74. On the rabbinic restrictions concerning Jewish presence in theater and circus shows and more on their fluctuating views concerning these recreational and cultural institutions, see Martin Jacobs, "Theaters and Performances as Reflected in the Talmud Yerushalmi," in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture I*, ed. P. Schäfer (Tübingen, 2000), 327–47; and Zeev Weiss, "The Jews of Ancient Palestine and the Roman Games: Rabbinic Dicta versus Communal Practice" (Hebrew), *Zion* 66.4 (2001): 427–59.

61. See van Nuffelen's notes in *Un héritage de Paix et de Piété*, 394–95. The same impression can be gathered from the Armenian adaptation of Socrates' *History*, ed. Thomson, *Armenian Adaptation*, 195–96. The *Chronicle* of John of Nikiu (ed. Charles, chaps. 84, 87–102) conveys a different impression, whereby the sequence of the events is anchored to the arrival and activity of the female pagan philosopher Hypatia and her Satanic influence on the local Roman governor, subverting his loyalty to the church.

62. Cf. the Armenian adaptation of Socrates, in Thomson, *Armenian Adaptation*, 196. John of Nikiu's *Chronicle* (ed. Charles, chap. 102) differs here in one detail concerning the synagogues. According to this tradition, the Christians "marched in wrath to the synagogues . . . took possession of them, and purified them and converted them into churches. And one of them they named after the name of S. George."

63. Noted by Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity*, 304: "Many of the synagogues were converted into churches, thereby providing Cyril with a graphic parallel to his uncle's [Theophilus's] conversion of pagan shrines a generation before." In my reckoning, this was not a case of simple emulation. Cyril's actions, as portrayed by Socrates, were ideologically calculated and devised within the distinct contemporary, overheated, interreligious atmosphere. For a thorough description and analysis of the acts and ideology surrounding this stage of interreligious tension in Egypt, see David Frankfurter, "Iconoclasm and Christianization in Late Antique Egypt: Christian Treatments of Space and Image," in *From Temple to Church*, ed. Hahn et al., 135–69.

64. Socrates' exaggeration is countered by the fact that the Alexandrian Jewish community staged a rather rapid recovery; cf. Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity*, 127.

65. See, e.g., the appraisal of Socrates' thematic ideas in Ivan Krivushin, "Socrates Scholasticus' *Church History*: Themes, Ideas, Heroes," *ByzF* 23 (1996): 95–107. On retributive elements in the thematic formation of Eusebius's continuators, including Socrates, see G. W. Trompf, *Early Christian Historiography: Narratives of Retributive Justice* (New York, 2000), 213–52, esp. 228.

66. Socrates' account in this book centered on the reign of Theodosius II, during which he exemplifies the emperor's role in overcoming ecclesiastical strife. Though the period leading to Theodosius's rule as well as his days is studded with ecclesial dissensions and tension, Socrates ends his work in praise: "In such flourishing conditions were the affairs of the Church at this time. . . . For as long as peace continues, those who desire to write histories will find no materials for their purpose" (*HE* 7.48). On the centrality of this theme in Socrates' *History*, see Joachim Szidat, "Friede in Kirche und Staat: Zum politischen Ideal des Kirchenhistorikers Sokrates," in *Welt des Sokrates von Konstantinopel: Studien zu Politik, Religion und Kultur im späten 4. und frühen 5. Jh. N. Chr. zu Ehren von Christoph Schäublin*, ed. B. Bäbler and H.-G. Nesselrath (Munich, 2001), 1–14.

67. Norman H. Baynes, “Alexandria and Constantinople: A Study in Ecclesiastical Diplomacy” [1926], repr. in *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays* (London, 1955), 97–115. For more on the intricacies of the emerging powerful status of the church of Constantinople in the years following the Constantinople synod in 381, see P. Karlin-Hayter, “Activity of the Bishop of Constantinople Outside His *Paroikia* between 381 and 451,” in *Καθηγητρια: Essays Presented to J. Hussey for Her 80th Birthday*, ed. J. Chrysostomides (Camberley, U.K., 1988), 179–210.

68. Reading the various contemporary sources describing the feud between John Chrysostom and Theophilus, one notices the immense effort that was applied to mar the latter’s image. Socrates’ account of the events (constituting most of book 6), which seems to be based on a close scrutiny of the contemporary sources, is more sober. Though tending to blame Theophilus for his constant plotting against John, the latter does not escape his criticism, either. See the illuminating study on the matter by Susanna Elm, who has depicted a different picture of Theophilus’s role, and indeed of the entire setting: “The Dog That Did Not Bark: Doctrine and Patriarchal Authority in the Conflict between Theophilus of Alexandria and John Chrysostom of Constantinople,” in *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric and Community*, ed. L. Ayres and G. Jones (London, 1998), 68–93. For more on the dispute between the two prelates and the tension between the sees, see Russell, “The Life of Theophilus of Alexandria,” 27–34 (with extensive bibliography).

69. It would seem that the Novatians served alongside the Jews in the eyes of Socrates in the role of litmus paper, testing and valuing the historical images of bishops and the fate of their sees according to the manner in which they treated them. Apart from the case of Cyril of Alexandria, see Socrates, *HE* 7.9 (on Rome).

70. Socrates, *HE* 7.13. Was he the Adamantius mentioned later by Isidore of Pelusium (Epist., I, 141), who refuted Jewish arguments concerning the incarnation?

71. The rivalry between Constantinople and Alexandria (and Rome) as a leading theme in Socrates’ evaluation of historical events has recently been reiterated by Edward Watts, “Interpreting Catastrophe: Disasters in the Works of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, Socrates Scholasticus, Philostorgius, and Timothy Aelurus,” *JLA* 2.1 (2009): 79–98, esp. 83–87. While Watts should be credited for considering the Jewish component in his evaluation of Socrates’ narrative program, his treatment fails to expose the length to which Socrates was willing to go, i.e., to establish Constantinopolitan religious and moral supremacy (over the see of Alexandria) and in this setting to present Atticus as an exemplary figure. The stark contrast between the two types of leadership in the church is more apparent in a series of episodes narrated by Socrates, *HE* 7.4–5, than in that presented by Watts. For more on the ambitious Constantinopolitan struggle to attain the image of the “ultimate Christian city and capital,” see Philippe Blauveau, “Constantinople (IVe–VIe s): Vers l’affirmation d’une cité chrétienne totale?,” *SMSR* 75.1 (2009): 295–313.

72. This was a case of a very selective curriculum vitae. All means seemed suitable in the eyes of Socrates in presenting this quasi-hagiographic image of the bishop of Constantinople, even the concealment of vital facts about his participation and conduct, if not the sheer orchestration, of one of the most famous and disturbing events in ecclesiastical history of “New Rome” to date: the deposition and later exile of its most admired (though controversial, in some quarters) bishop, John Chrysostom in the year 404 (the Synod of the Oak). For if we are to accept only in part the complaints leveled at Atticus by Chrysostom’s follower and apologist Palladius, Atticus played a major role, if he was not their chief perpetrator (*pases mechanes technites kata tou Iohanou*), in the plot to oust Chrysostom from the Constantinopolitan see. Cf. Palladius, *Dialogus de vita S. Iohannis Chrysostomi*, XI, ed. and trans. A.-M. Malingery, *SC* 341 (Paris, 1988), 216–18. Atticus actively persecuted the followers of John and those who supported Pelagius; see, e.g., J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, “Friends and Enemies of John Chrysostom,”

in *Maistor: Classical, Byzantine and Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning*, ed. A. Moffat (Canberra, 1984), 85–91; and more recently, Van Neffelen, *Un héritage de Paix et de Piété*, 30–36. In a later (ca. 417) exchange between Atticus and Cyril on the subject of reinstating John Chrysostom's name in the church's diptychs and liturgy, under mounting public pressure (commanded by the followers of John, the *Johanites*), Atticus finally succumbed to their demand. Though presenting it as a political concession on his part, he was derided by Cyril as a hypocrite, lacking resolve and stance. Cyril, *Epistulae* 75 (PG 77.349c) (letter by Atticus), and *Epistulae* 76 (PG 77.357b) (Cyril's reply and rejection of Atticus's move: "this move would be tantamount to reinstating Judas into the apostolic circle"). It did not take long to unmask Atticus's personality. At about the same time that Socrates published his treatise, Sozomen published his *History*, in which we find this statement: Atticus "possessed more by nature than by learning, and became a participant in affairs and was as skillful in carrying on intrigues [*epiboulas*, plots] as evading the machinations of others" (8.27). We do not have to speculate why Socrates chose to whitewash Atticus's blemished career. For all we know, it could have emanated from Atticus's benevolent attitude toward the Novations, Socrates' literary protégés, in opposition to the way they were treated by Cyril of Alexandria. The differences between Cyril and Atticus were not so great—both prelates were ruthless zealots, differing only in the methods of achieving their goals. While Cyril was enslaved to his hotheadedness, Atticus was a quietly subtle manipulator. This puts a different spin on the ideal of irenic leadership.

CHAPTER 8

Earlier versions of this essay were presented at the Religious Studies Seminar at Brown University (2007), at the fourteenth Gruss Colloquium in Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania (2008), and at the second annual meeting of the Israeli Byzantine Society in Jerusalem (2009). I am grateful to the participants of these meetings for their comments, suggestions, and criticism, all of which contributed immensely to this essay.

1. See Maria-Zoe Petropoulou, *Animal Sacrifice in Ancient Greek Religion, Judaism, and Christianity, 100 BC to AD 200* (Oxford, 2008); and Guy G. Stroumsa, *The End of Sacrifice: Religious Transformations in Late Antiquity* (Chicago, 2009; original in French, 2005).

2. See Stefan C. Reif, "Approaches to Sacrifices in Early Jewish Prayer," in *Studies in Jewish Prayer*, ed. R. Hayward and B. Embry (Oxford, 2005), 135–50.

3. Michael D. Swartz, "Ritual about Myth about Ritual: Toward an Understanding of the *Avodah* in the Rabbinic Period," *JJTP* 6.1 (1997): 152–53.

4. On the biblical background of the latter phrase and the late ancient context of the whole subject, see Shlomo Naeh, "'Creates the Fruit of Lips': A Phenomenological Study of Prayer according to Mishnah Berakhot 4.3, 5.5" (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 63.2 (1994): 185–218. See also Gary A. Anderson, "The Praise of God as a Cultic Event," in *Priesthood and Cult in Ancient Israel*, ed. Anderson and S. M. Olyan (Sheffield, 1991), 15–33.

5. From the third-century Mekhilta de Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai 23.25; quoted from David Nelson, *The Mekhilta de-Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai* (Philadelphia, 2006), 371. The word "service" (*avodah*) here means sacrificial cult (e.g., mAvot 1.2). For a fourth-century Christian example, see Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses* (2.182): "This is the sacrifice pleasing to God, a verbal sacrifice, as the Apostle says, the fragrance of prayer"; Abraham J. Malherbe and Everett Ferguson, *The Life of Moses, Gregory of Nyssa* (New York, 1978), 101. Although the phrasing "a verbal sacrifice" in the English translation is appealing for my purposes, it is a very loose translation of the Greek original (*tò kárpōma tōn cheilōn*).

6. For the role of sacrifice in late antique and medieval Jewish magical texts, see Michael D. Swartz, “Sacrificial Themes in Jewish Magic,” in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, ed. P. Mirecki and M. Meyer (Leiden, 2002), 303–15. Here one can also find references to contemporary “pagan” and Christian magical texts.

7. See Zvi Zohar, “Umi metaher etkhem: Avikhem sheba-shamaim: Tefilat seder ha-‘avodah shel yom ha-kipurim: Tokhen, tafkid, u-mashma‘ut,” *AJS Review* 14.1 (1989): 6–8, 27–28.

8. However, the earliest extant evidences for this practice are from the High Middle Ages. On this liturgical practice, see Ophir Münz-Manor, “From *Seder ha-Ma‘arakha* to *Seder ha-Ma‘amadot*: The Emergence and Transformations of a Liturgical Rite in the Middle Ages” (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 73 (2004): 293–310; for the “prehistory” of this ritual, see Joseph Tabory, “*Ma‘amadot*: A Second-Temple Non-Temple Liturgy,” in *Liturgical Perspectives: Prayer and Poetry in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. E. G. Chazon (Leiden, 2003), 235–61.

9. See Paul F. Bradshaw, “The Use of the Bible in Liturgy: Some Historical Perspectives,” *Studia Liturgica* 22.1 (1992): 40.

10. This saying must have had as well a social context; surely, Chrysostom was trying to get his congregation to participate in the worship in a more serious and respectful way. On Chrysostom and his congregation, see Jaclyn L. Maxwell, *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity: John Chrysostom and His Congregation in Antioch* (Cambridge, 2006); and Isabella Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greek, Jews, and Christians in Antioch* (Cambridge, 2008), 63–90, 256–60.

11. On this aspect of sacrifice in the Jewish and Christian contexts, see Petropoulou, *Animal Sacrifice*, 1–31; and Swartz, “Ritual about Myth about Ritual,” 151–52.

12. See, e.g., Susan Ashbrook Harvey, “Spoken Words, Voiced Silence: Biblical Women in Syrian Tradition,” *J ECS* 9 (2001): 105–31; Georgia Frank, “Romanos and the Night Vigil in the Sixth Century,” in *A People’s History of Christianity*, vol. 3, ed. D. Krueger (Minneapolis, 2006), 59–80; Derek Krueger, “Romanos the Melodist and the Christian Self in Early Byzantium,” in *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, vol. 1, ed. E. Jeffreys (Aldershot, 2006), 255–76; and Ophir Münz-Manor, “Carnavalesque Ambivalence and the Christian *Other* in Jewish Poems from Byzantine Palestine,” in *Jews of Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures*, ed. R. Bonfil et al. (Leiden, 2011), 831–45.

13. The genre has its literary roots in the second-century BCE Wisdom of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus). See Cecil Roth, “Ecclesiasticus in the Synagogue Service,” *JBL* 71.3 (1952): 171–78; and Menahem Kister, “5Q13 and the ‘Avodah: A Historical Survey and Its Significance,” *DSD* 8.2 (2001): 136–48. For an up-to-date overview of the genre, see Michael Swartz and Joseph Yahalom, *Avodah: An Anthology of Ancient Poetry for Yom Kippur* (University Park, Pa., 2005), 1–42.

14. The dating is based on the fact that this *Seder ‘avodah* is earlier than the *Sidre ‘avodah* of Yose ben Yose, the fifth-century poet. See Aharon Mirsky, *Yose ben Yose: Poems* (Jerusalem, 1991), 26–31. On earlier stages of the *Seder ‘avodah* in rabbinic literature, see Swartz, “Ritual about Myth about Ritual,” 140–41.

15. This eucharistic prayer is the earliest example of the so-called West Syrian anaphora, which deeply influenced the Byzantine anaphora. On this type of anaphora, see Derek Krueger, “The Liturgical Creation of a Christian Past: Identity and Community in Anaphoral Prayers,” in *Unclassical Traditions*, ed. C. Kelly, M. Williams, and R. Flower (Cambridge, 2010), 1:58–71. I thank Derek Krueger for sharing this article with me prior to its publication.

16. On the *Seder ‘avodah* and this tendency, see Swartz, “Ritual about Myth about Ritual,” 142–45.

17. It is almost impossible to reconstruct the exact historical circumstances that brought the two

texts so close together. I already mentioned that the *Seder 'avodah* has distinct literary roots in the Wisdom of Ben Sira; however, this does not prove that the anaphora in the *Constitutiones apostolorum* took its inspiration from the Jewish *Seder 'avodah*. Although genealogy of (liturgical) texts is a well-established field, it is of lesser importance to my current study, which is synchronic and conceptual. Both texts analyzed here were composed at roughly the same time in similar geocultural settings, a fact that complicates any diachronic claim.

18. Louis Ligier, *Péché d'Adam et péché du monde: Bible, Kippur, Eucharistie*, vol. 2: *Le Nouveau Testament* (Paris, 1961), 289–307; Ligier, “Autour du sacrifice eucharistique: Anaphores orientales et anamnèse juive de Kippur,” *NRT* 82 (1960): 40–55; and Ligier, “Anaphores orientales et prières juives,” *Proche-Orient Chrétien* 13 (1963): 99–113.

19. This assertion was criticized by David Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish: An Examination of the Constitutiones Apostolorum* (Chico, Calif., 1985). For a discussion of this issue, see Menahem Kister, “The Prayers of the Seventh Book of the *Apostolic Constitutions* and Their Implications for the Formulation of the Synagogue Prayers” (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 77.2 (2008): 205–38. It is now accepted that Jewish and Christian liturgy developed mutually, with numerous parallel developments; see Albert Gerhards and Clemens Leonhard, eds., *Jewish and Christian Liturgy and Worship: New Insights into Its History and Interaction* (Leiden, 2007).

20. See Daniel Stökl ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity: The Day of Atonement from Second Temple Judaism to the Fifth Century* (Tübingen, 2003), 336, who partially based his conclusion on David Fiensy’s *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish*, although Ligier’s claim was not discussed there (as Stökl ben Ezra notes).

21. Zohar, “*Umi metaher etkhem*,” 19–24.

22. *Ibid.*, 6–7, 18.

23. Swartz, “Ritual about Myth about Ritual,” 137.

24. *Ibid.*, 152–55.

25. On the centrality of the present in rabbinic discourse on the Temple, see Elchanan Reiner, “Destruction, Temple and Holy Place: On the Medieval Perception of Time and Place,” in *Streams into the Sea*, ed. R. Livneh-Freudenthal and E. Reiner (Tel Aviv, 2001), 138–52; and Ishay Rosen-Zvi, *The Rite That Was Not: Temple, Midrash, and Gender in Tractate Sotah* (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 2008), 236–38.

26. Krueger, “The Liturgical Creation of a Christian Past.”

27. This resemblance, it must be stressed, is corroborated by later successors of the *Seder 'avodah* and the anaphora of the *Constitutiones apostolorum* from Late Antiquity as well as from the High Middle Ages. See Krueger, “The Liturgical Creation of a Christian Past”; and Swartz and Yahalom, *Avodah*.

28. David Frankfurter, “Narrating Power: The Theory and Practice of the Magical *Historiola* in Ritual Spells,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, ed. M. W. Meyer and P. Mirecki (Leiden, 1995), 458.

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*, 464. The liturgical poems under discussion and the Greco-Roman *historiola* seem to relate as well to contemporary Jewish mystical texts—namely, *hekhalot* literature. Martha Himmelfarb has written on the latter: “No need for the mystic to ascend, for telling the story is enough. The actual performance of the acts is attributed to a mythic past, the era of the great rabbis of the Mishnah; recitation itself has become the ritual.” Martha Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York, 1993), 113.

31. The term was coined by Guy Stroumsa; see his “Christ’s Laughter: Docetic Origins Reconsidered,” *J ECS* 12.3 (2004): 287. See also the sequel to that article: Ronnie Goldstein and Guy G. Stroumsa, “The Greek and Jewish Origins of Docetism: A New Proposal,” *JAC* 10.3 (2007): 423–41.

32. The literature on the subject is immense; see, e.g., Edward Kessler, *Bound by the Bible: Jews,*

Christians and the Sacrifice of Isaac (Cambridge, 2004); Wout van Bekkum, “The Aqedah and Its Interpretation in Midrash and Piyyut,” in *The Sacrifice of Isaac: The Aqedah (Genesis 22) and Its Interpretations*, ed. E. Noort and E. J. Tigchelaar (Leiden, 2002), 86–95; and Sebastian Brock, “Genesis 22 in Syriac Tradition,” in *Mélanges Dominique Barthélemy: Études bibliques offertes à l’occasion de son 60e anniversaire*, ed. P. Casetti, O. Keel, and A. Schenker (Göttingen, 1981), 2–30.

33. This is true for the kind of poems discussed in this article. In others, we find precise quotations from Scripture; on this last feature in Hebrew liturgical poetry of the period, see Shulamit Elizur, “The Use of Biblical Verse in Hebrew Liturgical Poetry,” in *Prayers That Cite Scripture*, ed. J. L. Kugel (Cambridge, Mass., 2006), 83–100.

34. The idea that the deeds of the patriarchs can affect the present is known elsewhere from rabbinic literature as the “merits of the fathers” (*zekhut avot*). See Uri Ehrlich, “Between ‘Ancestral Merit’ and ‘Ancestral Responsibility’: A Chapter in Early Rabbinic Prayer Thought” (Hebrew), in *By the Well: Studies in Jewish Philosophy and Halakhic Thought Presented to Gerald J. Blidstein*, ed. U. Ehrlich, H. Kreisel, and D. J. Lasker (Beersheva, 2008), 13–23.

35. Hebrew text in Bernard Septimus, “*Hananto le-Meah peri*: From Early Piyyut to the Babylonian Talmud,” *Leshonenu* 71.1–2 (2009): 79–95; English translation by T. Carmi, *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse* (New York, 1981), 201–2.

36. Michael D. Swartz, *Mystical Prayer in Ancient Judaism: An Analysis of Ma’aseh Merkavah* (Tübingen, 1992), 171–210.

37. Shalom Spiegel, *The Last Trial: On the Legends and Lore of the Command to Abraham to Offer Isaac as a Sacrifice* (New York, 1969), 38–44; and G. Stroumsa, “Christ’s Laughter.”

38. Michael Sokoloff and Joseph Yahalom, *Jewish Palestinian Aramaic Poetry from Late Antiquity: Critical Edition with Introduction and Commentary* (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1999), 124–31. English translation from van Bekkum, “The Aqedah and Its Interpretation,” 94–95. For a short English introduction to the Jewish Aramaic poems, see Michael Sokoloff and Joseph Yahalom, “Aramaic Piyyutim from the Byzantine Period,” *JQR* 75.3 (1985): 309–21.

39. The description of Isaac as a willing victim (here and in the other poems) relates to ancient Mediterranean sacrificial rituals that were designed to elicit a sign of consent from the victim. See Stanley Stowers, “On the Comparison of Blood in Greek and Israelite Ritual,” in *Hesed Ve-Emet: Studies in Honor of Ernest S. Frerichs*, ed. J. Magness and S. Gitin (Atlanta, 1998), 179–94.

40. On the reworking of this biblical narrative in rabbinic literature, see Yaakov Elbaum, “From Sermon to Story: The Transformation of the Akedah,” *Prooftexts* 6.2 (1986): 97–116; and Maren Niehoff, “The Return of Myth in Genesis Rabbah on the Akeda,” *JJS* 46.1/2 (1995): 69–87.

41. Isaac seems to be quoting a poem that features an acrostic and allocates three words per hemistich (*av la has / breyh la ’kiv*). In a fifth-century *Seder ’avodah* by Yose ben Yose, we find a strikingly similar verse: “The father had no pity / and the son did not hesitate” (*av lo’ hamal / ben lo’ yihar*). For Yose’s poem, see Swartz and Yahalom, *Avodah*, 244–45.

42. Sebastian Brock, “Two Syriac Verse Homilies on the Binding of Isaac,” *Le Muséon* 99.1/2 (1986): 61–129.

43. Syriac text and English translation in *ibid.*, 119, 124.

44. *Ibid.*, 111.

45. See Spiegel, *The Last Trial*; and Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* (Stanford, Calif., 1999), 117–18. In Christian literature, a similar role is played by Jephtah’s daughter, who, in contrast to the biblical Isaac, was sacrificed. On her image in Syriac poetry and its relation to Isaac, see Susan Ashbrook Harvey and Ophir Münz-Manor, *Jacob of Serug’s Homily on Jephtah’s Daughter* (Piscataway, N.J., 2010).

46. The classical study on Romanos's life and work is José Grosdidier de Matons, *Romanos Le Mélode et les origines de la poésie religieuse à Byzance* (Paris, 1977). See also Derek Krueger, *Writing and Holiness: The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East* (Philadelphia, 2004), 159–88; and Lucas van Rompay, "Romanos le Mélode: Un poète syrien à Constantinople," in *Early Christian Poetry: A Collection of Essays*, ed. J. den Boeft and A. Hilhorst (Leiden, 1993), 283–96. Some scholars believe that Romanos was of Jewish descent (see the studies above), but this assertion has little, if any, bearing on the intersection of Romanos's poetry and Jewish sources.

47. Marjorie Carpenter, *Kontakia of Romanos, Byzantine Melodist*, vol. 2: *On Christian Life* (Columbia, Mo., 1973), 67–68.

48. From Derek Krueger's response to an earlier version of this essay that was presented at the fourteenth Gruss Colloquium in Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania (April 30, 2008). I am grateful to Derek Krueger, who kindly shared with me the text of his response.

49. Carpenter, *Kontakia of Romanos*, 68.

50. Brock, "Two Syriac Verse Homilies," 91–96.

51. Carpenter, *Kontakia of Romanos*, 70.

52. The same picture emerges from other late ancient poems on the subject; see Ephrem Lash, "Sermon on Abraham and Isaac" (<http://www.anastasis.org.uk/AbrIsaac.htm>); Lash, "Metrical Texts of Greek Ephrem," *StPatr* 35 (2001): 433–48; Ton Hilhorst, "The Bodmer Poem on the Sacrifice of Abraham," in *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, ed. Noort and Tigchelaar, 96–108; Pieter van der Horst, "A New Early Christian Poem on the Sacrifice of Isaac (Pap. Bodmer 30)," in van der Horst, *Jews and Christians in Their Graeco-Roman Context: Selected Essays on Early Judaism, Samaritanism, Hellenism, and Christianity* (Tübingen, 2006), 190–205; and Kevin J. Kalish, "Greek Christian Poetry in Classical Forms: The Codex of Visions from the Bodmer Papyri and the Melding of Literary Traditions" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2009).

53. See Ophir Münz-Manor, "Liturgical Poetry in the Late Antique Near East: A Comparative Approach," *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 1.3 (2010): 336–61.

CHAPTER 9

I would like to thank Micha Perry for sharing with me his preliminary research into the medieval throne of Solomon traditions. I am also grateful to Leah Boustán and Brad King for their valuable editorial interventions.

1. Liudprand of Cremona, *Retribution* (or *Antapodosis*) 6.5 (written 958–962); Paolo Squatriti, trans., *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona* (Washington, D.C., 2007), 196–97. See also the description of the court in A. Vasilev, "Harun-Ibn-Yahya and His Description of Constantinople," *Seminarium Kondakovianum* 5 (1932): 149–63.

2. On the historical development and ideological functions of imperial ceremonial, see, esp., Michael McCormick, *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and the Medieval West* (Cambridge, 1986); McCormick, "Analyzing Imperial Ceremonies," *JÖByz* 35 (1985): 1–20; and Sabine G. McCormack, *Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, Calif., 1981).

3. See, esp., Shaun F. Tougher, "The Wisdom of Leo VI," in *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium*, ed. P. Magdalino (Aldershot, 1994), 171–79. On the figure of Solomon the builder in sixth-century Byzantine sources, see Jonathan Bardill, "A New Temple for Byzantium: Anicia Juliana, King Solomon, and the Gilded Ceiling in the Church of St. Polyeuktos in Constantinople," in *Social and Political Life in Late Antiquity*, ed. W. Bowden et al. (Leiden, 2006),

339–70; Martin Harrison, “From Jerusalem and Back Again: The Fate of the Treasures of Solomon,” in *Churches Built in Ancient Times* (London, 1994), 239–48; Harrison, *A Temple for Byzantium: The Discovery and Excavation of Anicia Juliana’s Palace-Church in Istanbul* (London, 1989). See, however, the reservations expressed in Robert Ousterhout, “New Temples and New Solomons: The Rhetoric of Byzantine Architecture,” in *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, ed. Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson (Washington, D.C., 2010), 223–53.

4. See Magdalino and Nelson, introduction to *Old Testament in Byzantium*, 11–13 and 21–25; Gilbert Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium*, trans. J. Birrell (Cambridge, 2003), 84–124; Bernard Flusin, “Construire une nouvelle Jérusalem: Constantinople et les reliques,” in *Orient dans l’histoire religieuse de l’Europe: L’invention des origines*, ed. M. A. Amir-Moezzi and J. Scheid (Turnhout, 2000), 51–70; and Otto Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee nach ihrer Gestaltung im Höfischen Zeremoniell* (2nd ed.; Darmstadt, 1956), 129–35.

5. The phrase is taken from Peter Brown, “The Problem of Christianization,” *PBA* 82 (1993): 96.

6. Ra’anan S. Boustán, “The Spoils of the Jerusalem Temple at Rome and Constantinople: Jewish Counter-Geography in a Christianizing Empire,” in *Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. G. Gardner and K. Osterloh (Tübingen, 2008), 327–72.

7. Benjamin Klar, ed., *Megilat abima’ats* (Jerusalem, 1974), 18, line 7, where the chronicler’s own ancestor R. Shefátya travels to Constantinople to debate the ninth-century founder of the Macedonian dynasty Basil I (867–886 CE) concerning the comparative glory of the Hagia Sophia and the Temple of Solomon.

8. Alexei M. Sivertsev, *Judaism and Imperial Ideology in Late Antiquity* (New York, 2011), 217.

9. Yair Lorberbaum, *Disempowered King: Monarchy in Classical Jewish Literature* (London, 2011).

10. Giorgio Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government*, trans. L. Chiesa (Stanford, Calif., 2011), esp. 167–259.

11. Matthew P. Canepa, *The Two Eyes of the Earth: Art and Ritual of Kingship between Rome and Sasanian Iran* (Berkeley, Calif., 2009), esp. 7–33.

12. Oleg Grabar, “The Shared Culture of Objects,” in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. H. Maguire (Washington, D.C., 1997), 115–29. On the presence of foreigners in medieval Constantinople, see, esp., Claudia Rapp, “A Medieval Cosmopolis: Constantinople and Its Foreign Inhabitants,” in *Alexander’s Revenge: Hellenistic Culture through the Centuries*, ed. J. M. Åsgeirsson and N. van Deusen (Reykjavík, 2002), 153–71; see also the contributions to Ruth Macrides, ed., *Travel in the Byzantine World* (Aldershot, 2002).

13. The earliest evidence of court-sponsored monumental art depicting the throne would seem to be in the bath hall of the Umayyad palace complex known as Khirbat al-Majfar; see Priscilla P. Soucek, “Solomon’s Throne / Solomon’s Bath: Model or Metaphor,” *Ars Orientalis* 23 (1993): 109–34. For a collection of later Arabic literary sources on the throne of Solomon, see Georg Salzberger, *Die Salomosage in der semitischen Literatur: Ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Sagenkunde* (Berlin, 1907), 43–63.

14. For a complete catalog of these sources, see Beate Ego, *Targum Scheni zu Ester: Übersetzung, Kommentar und theologische Deutung* (Tübingen, 1996), 159–68; and Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews* (rev. ed.; Philadelphia, 2003), 2:970 n. 69.

15. For important treatment of the historical development of these midrashim, see Myron B. Lerner, “The Works of Aggadic Midrash and the Esther Midrashim,” in *The Literature of the Sages*, ed. S. Safrai et al. (Minneapolis, Minn., 1987), 2:133–230. I have not yet been able to consult the recently completed thesis of Binyamin Elbaum, “Midrash Abba Gurion on Esther: The Version and Its Redactions” (Ph.D. diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2011).

16. See, most recently, the fragment published in Alon Tenami, “A Genizah Fragment of the

Legend of King Solomon's Throne" (Hebrew), *Ginzei Qedem* 6 (2010): 197–210. See also Rimón Kasher and Michael L. Klein, "New Fragments of Targum to Esther from the Cairo Genizah," *HUCA* 61 (1990): 89–129.

17. The last comprehensive studies were Georg Salzberger, *Salomos Tempelbau und Thron in der semitischen Sagenliteratur* (Berlin, 1912); and August Wünsche, *Salomos Thron und Hippodrom, Abbilder des babylonischen Himmelsbildes* (Leipzig, 1906).

18. For linguistic reasons, Bernard Grossfeld dates the targum prior to late seventh-century Palestine; see Bernard Grossfeld, trans., *The Two Targums of Esther* (Collegeville, Minn., 1991), 7–8, 19–21, 23–24; and Bernard Grossfeld, ed., *The Targum Sheni to the Book of Esther: A Critical Edition Based on MS. Sassoon 282 with Critical Apparatus* (New York, 1994), ix–x. Grossfeld's dating is supported by Ego, *Targum Sheni*, 21–25. The "throne" passage is found at Grossfeld, *Targum Sheni*, 29–30, and is translated in Grossfeld, *The Two Targums*, 111–13. For analysis of this passage in the context of *Targum Sheni*, see Beate Ego, "All Kingdoms and Kings Trembled before Him: The Image of King Solomon in *Targum Sheni* on *Megillat Esther*," *Journal for the Aramaic Bible* 3.1/2 (2001): 65–66; and Ego, *Targum Sheni*, 159–68.

19. MS München-Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. hebr. 222, 50a–56b. This text was first edited in J. Perles, "Thron und Circus des Königs Salomo," *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 21 (1872): 122–35. Perles's *editio princeps* was republished with slight modifications and without its opening Aramaic segment (drawn from or sharing a common source with *Targum Sheni* to *Esther*), in Adolf Jellinek, ed., *Bet ha-midrash*, 6 vols. (Jerusalem, 1967 [1853–78]), 5:34–39. The Jellinek version was itself reprinted in J. D. Eisenstein, ed., *Otsar midrashim* (New York, 1915), 2:527–30, though Eisenstein's version introduces a number of misreadings.

20. See, esp., Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium* (Oxford, 1976), 149–53. See also Pieter W. van der Horst, "Jews and Blues in Late Antiquity," in van der Horst, *Jews and Christians in Their Graeco-Roman Context* (Tübingen, 2006), 53–58.

21. Evelyne Ville-Patlagean, "Une image de Salomon en Basileus Byzantin," *REJ* 71 (1962): 9–33.

22. In particular, Ville-Patlagean, "Une image de Salomon," 19–20, points to the Hebrew word *diksomin* used in the text, which she believes renders the Greek word *deximon*, i.e., "official reception" (passage 2). Patlagean points out that earlier rabbinic sources know the Greek loanword *deksomini*, meaning "cistern," which is what Perles and Wünsche in his wake took it to mean. Patlagean, by contrast, notes that the Hebrew *diksomin* better renders the neuter *deximon* and not the feminine *dexamine* and that this neuter form is very particular to the *Book of Ceremonies*. In addition, Patlagean argues that there are strong similarities between what is described in the "Hippodrome of Solomon" and the court rituals described in the *Book of Ceremonies* that took place in the *phialae* (courtyards) of the factions—and especially the *Phiale* of the *Trikonch*—where the factions would receive the emperor with acclamations and dance, while fountains poured out spiced wine called *kondition*.

23. On *The Book of Ceremonies* as a multilayered and unevenly redacted work, see the brief but very helpful entry by Michael McCormick, "De Ceremoniis," in *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. A. P. Kazhdan (Oxford, 1991), 595–97. On the literary construction in *The Book of Ceremonies*, see, esp., McCormick, "Analyzing Imperial Ceremonies," 1–20; Averil Cameron, "The Construction of Court Ritual: The Byzantine Book of Ceremonies," in *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, ed. D. Cannadine and S. Price (Cambridge, 1987), 106–36; and Ann Moffatt, "The Master of Ceremonies' Bottom Drawer: The Unfinished State of the *De Ceremoniis* of Constantine Porphyrogenetos," *Byzantinoslavica* 56 (1995): 377–88. Emphasis on the text's project of crafting a timeless and unchanging image of court ceremonial from earlier sources goes back to J. B. Bury, "The Ceremonial Book of Constantine Porphyrogenetos," *EHR* 22 (1907): 417–39.

24. The Byzantine sources for the throne of Solomon are most usefully collected in Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee*, 134–35. See also András Alföldi, “Die Geschichte des Thronabernakels,” *Nouvelle Clío* 1/2 (1949–50): 537–66.

25. Gilbert Dagron, “Trônes pour un empereur,” in *Byzantium: State and Society, in Memory of Nikos Oikonomides*, ed. A. Avramea et al. (Athens, 2003), 188–89. On the symbolic meaning of the imperial thrones used in receptions of foreign ambassadors, see Canepa, *The Two Eyes of the Earth*, 141–48.

26. On the history of the Magnaura, see Jan Kostenec, “Studies on the Great Palace in Constantinople II: The Magnaura,” *Byzantinoslavica* 60 (1999): 161–82. On the evolution of the palace more generally and the challenge of reconstructing its changing spatial arrangement over time, see Jonathan Bardill, “Visualizing the Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors at Constantinople: Archaeology, Text, and Topography,” in *Visualisierungen von Herrschaft: Frühmittelalterliche Residenzen—Gestalt und Zeremoniell*, ed. F. A. Bauer (Istanbul, 2006), 5–45.

27. *De Ceremoniis* I, 33, 24: *anelthontes ekathisan en tōi neokataskoustōi senzōi tōi histamenōi en tōi tēs Manauras triklinōi*. For the text, see J. J. Reiske, ed., *Constantini Pophyrogeniti imperatoris de ceremoniis byzantini, libri duo*, 2 vols. (Bonn, 1879), 1:137, line 24, to 138, line 1. All citations of the *De Ceremoniis* refer to this edition.

28. On the dating of the construction of the throne, see Dagron, “Trônes pour un empereur,” 188–89 n. 47. Cf. Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee*, 134–35 n. 21, and Leslie Brubaker, *Inventing Byzantine Iconoclasm* (London, 2012), 100, which place its construction a half-century earlier under Emperor Theophilos (r. 829–842). The evidence for the earlier dating is circumstantial: while Leo the Grammarian (Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453: Sources and Documents* [Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972], 160–61) does associate Theophilos’s reign with the production of court automata and other such mechanical devices, he does not explicitly mention the throne of Solomon, an odd omission had the emperor, in fact, commissioned this item.

29. See Jeffrey Michael Featherstone, “ΔΙ’ ΕΝΔΕΙΞΙΝ: Display in Court Ceremonial (*De Ceremoniis* II, 15),” in *The Material and the Ideal: Essays in Medieval Art and Archaeology in Honor of Jean-Michel Spieser*, ed. A. Cutler and A. Papaconstantinou (Leiden, 2007), 83–84. Cf. *De Ceremoniis* I, 24, 137.

30. On the hydraulic technology used in the operation of the throne of Solomon’s throne, see the still-fundamental discussion in Gerard Brett, “The Automata in the Byzantine ‘Throne of Solomon,’” *Speculum* 29.3 (1954): 477–87. On the use of organs and automata in Byzantine imperial ceremonial more generally, see Albrecht Berger, “Die akustische Dimension des Kaiserzeremoniells: Gesang, Orgelspiel und Automaten,” in *Visualisierungen von Herrschaft*, ed. Bauer, 47–61.

31. Averil Cameron, ed. and trans., *Flavius Cresconius Corippus: In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris* (London, 1976), 106.

32. Corippus, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 4.283, and Cameron’s commentary ad loc.

33. See Kostenec, “Studies on the Great Palace,” 168–69; and the entry “Thrones,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. A. Kazhdan (Oxford, 1990), 3:2082–83.

34. For discussion of the Deuteronomic restrictions and their later transformations, see Bernard M. Levinson, “The Reconceptualization of Kingship in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History’s Transformation of Torah,” *VT* 61 (2001): 511–34; and Steven D. Fraade, “The Torah of the King (Deut 17:14–20) in the Temple Scroll and Early Rabbinic Law,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. J. R. Davila (Leiden, 2003), 25–60.

35. See Lorberbaum, *Disempowered King*, 16–18, which builds upon Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (Frankfurt am Main, 1989), esp. 396–99.

36. The translation is by me and Oded Irshai. Cf. the early parallel in SifreDt §52 (ed. Finkelstein,

119), esp. the version in MS British Museum Add 16406 and the Venice printed edition, which reads: “Likewise Scripture says, *Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, besides the daughter of Pharaoh* (1 Kgs 11.1). Now if the daughter of Pharaoh was one of them, why then was she specified? To show that he loved her more than all the others, yet she caused him to sin more than all the rest of them. They reported that on the day that Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh, Gabriel descended and stuck a reed into the sea; (a thicket of?) thorn grew there and upon it the great city of Rome. On the day that Jeroboam set up the two golden calves, Rhomis and Rhmilos arose and built two huts in Rome.” Versions are also found at SongR 1.6.4; bShab 56b; and bSan 21b. The literature on this passage is extensive, but see, esp., the recent analyses in Joseph Geiger, “The Tombs of Remus and Romulus: An Overlooked Source and Its Implications,” *Athenaeum* 92.1 (2004): 245–54; Peri Terbuyken, “Rom in der rabbinischen Hermeneutik: Die Kompositionstechnik von *j’Abodah Zarah* 1,2 und *Cant. Rabbah* 1,35/42,” *JAC* 39 (1996): 116–27; and Louis H. Feldman, “Abba Kolon and the Founding of Rome,” *JQR* 81.3/4 (1991): 239–66, and the earlier literature cited there.

37. For comprehensive treatment of the sources, in Greek as well as Latin, for the story of Romulus and Remus, see, esp., T. P. Wiseman, *Remus: A Roman Myth* (Cambridge, 1995).

38. See discussion in Lorberbaum, *Disempowered King*, 66–72.

39. See bSan 20b; bGit 68b; bMeg 11a; and also the related traditions in ySan 2.6, 20c.

40. Lorberbaum, *Disempowered King*, 141.

41. I slightly amend the translation in Braude and Kapstein, trans., *Pesikta de-Rav Kahana* (Philadelphia, 1975), 16–17.

42. Cf. DeutR 5.6; Midrash Shir ha-Shirim 3:11; NumR 12.17. See also, e.g., the expanded version of this passage in the medieval text published in Perles, “Thron und Circus,” 132 (= MS München-Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. hebr. 222, 51b). This passage is not published in Jellinek’s excerpted version of Perles’s text.

43. The first part of Esther Rabbah (sections 1–6) may date as early as the sixth century (H. L. Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, trans. and ed. M. Bockmuehl [Minneapolis, 1996], 318–19). See my earlier discussion of this passage in “The Spoils of the Jerusalem Temple,” 363.

44. Cf. LevR 20; EcclR 9.2.1.

45. Translation follows Maurice Simon, *Midrash Rabbah: Esther and Song of Songs* (London, 1983), 28.

46. The tradition that Ahasuerus constructed a copy of Solomon’s throne may already be reflected in the third-century panels of the Dura Europos synagogue, which depict Solomon and Ahasuerus on identical thrones. This idea was first proposed in Carl H. Kraeling, *The Synagogue (Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Report 8, Pt. 1)* (New York, 1979), 89–90 (Solomon’s throne) and 158–59 (Ahasuerus’s throne); Kraeling’s view is affirmed in Kurt Weitzmann and Herbert L. Kessler, *The Frescoes of the Dura Synagogue and Christian Art* (Washington, D.C., 1990), 102–4, 114–19.

47. On the development of the seven-level cosmology, see Peter Schäfer, “In Heaven as It Is in Hell: The Cosmology of *Seder Rabbah di-Bereshit*,” in *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions*, ed. R. S. Boustani and A. Y. Reed (New York, 2004), 233–74.

48. Sivertsev, *Judaism and Imperial Ideology*, 23.

49. For the date and provenance, see Ville-Patlagean, “Une image de Salomon,” 19–20.

50. Jellinek, *Bet ha-midrash*, 5:34; Perles, “Thron und Circus,” 132; and MS München-Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. hebr. 222, 51a–b. The translation is mine. For the date and provenance of this text, see Ville-Patlagean, “Une image de Salomon,” 19–20.

51. Sivertsev, *Judaism and Imperial Ideology*, 184–86.

52. ExRab II (chaps. 15–52) is of uncertain dating but is closely related to the genre of midrash

Tanḥuma-Yelamdenu. On the late redaction of the work as a whole, see Strack and Stemberger, *Introduction*, 308–9.

53. I slightly amend the translation in Lorberbaum, *Disempowered King*, 163–64.

54. On the notion of “semiotic community” and its application to Late Antiquity broadly conceived, see Thomas Sizgorich, *Violence and Belief in Late Antiquity: Militant Devotion in Christianity and Islam* (Philadelphia, 2008), 27–36, 147–49, and 275–78.

55. Andrew S. Jacobs, *Remains of the Jews: The Holy Land and Christian Empire in Late Antiquity* (Stanford, Calif., 2004). See also Averil Cameron, “Byzantines and Jews: Some Recent Work on Early Byzantium,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 26 (1996): 249–74; Averil Cameron, “Disputations, Polemical Literature, and the Formation of Opinion in Early Byzantine Literature,” in *Dispute Poems and Dialogues in the Ancient and Medieval Near East*, ed. G. J. Reinink and H. J. L. Vanstiphout (Leuven, 1991), 91–108; and Gilbert Dagron and Vincent Déroche, “Juifs et chrétiens dans l’Orient du VII^e siècle,” *T&MByz* 11 (1991): 17–46.

CHAPTER 10

I wish to thank the participants of the 2008 Gruss Colloquium, especially Derek Krueger, Ophir Münz-Manor, and the editors of this volume, as well as Kristina Sessa for their advice and suggestions.

1. There appear to be two conclusions to this chain in mAvot, the first extending from Hillel and Shammai through the patriarchs (1.16–2.7) and the second ending with the disciples of Yoḥanan ben Zakkai (2.8–16). Different versions of the chain also appear in the recensions of *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* (in *Avot de-Rabbi Natan Mahadurat Sh. Z. Schechter*, ed. M. Kister [New York, 1997]). On these variations, see Anthony Saldarini, *Scholastic Rabbinism: A Literary Study of the Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* (Chico, Calif., 1982); Saldarini, “The End of the Rabbinic Chain of Tradition,” *JBL* 93.1 (1974): 97–106; Judah Goldin, *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* (New Haven, Conn., 1983), xix–xx; Jacob N. Epstein, *Mevo’ot le-sifrut ha-tana’im* (Jerusalem, 1957), 232–33; Myron B. Lerner, “The Tractate Avot,” in *The Literature of the Sages*, ed. S. Safrai (Minneapolis, 1987), 1:263–81; Lerner, “The External Tractates,” in *The Literature of the Sages*, ed. Safrai, 1:367–409; Amram Tropper, *Wisdom, Politics, and Historiography: Tractate Avot in the Context of the Graeco-Roman Near East* (Oxford, 2004); and Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia, 2004), 77–86.

2. On the implications of this motif, see Solomon Schechter’s notes in *Avot de-Rabbi Natan*, xxiv; Moshe David Herr, “Ha-retsef she-be-salshet mesirat ha-Torah: Le-verur ha-historiographiah ha-mikra’it be-hagutam shel hazal,” *Zion* 44 (1979): 43–56; Saldarini, *Scholastic Rabbinism*; Jacob Neusner, *Torah: From Scroll to Symbol in Formative Judaism* (Philadelphia, 1985), 56; Steven D. Fraade, *From Tradition to Commentary: Torah and Its Interpretation in the Midrash Sifre to Deuteronomy* (Albany, 1991), 69–71 and references there; Jonathan Wyn Schofer, *The Making of a Sage: A Study in Rabbinic Ethics* (Madison, Wisc., 2005), 45–46, 206–7; and Michael Swartz, *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton, N.J., 1996), 176–78.

3. On this motif, see Swartz, *Scholastic Magic*, 173–205.

4. See, e.g., Peter Schäfer, ed., *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (Tübingen, 1981), §80, where the passage appears to be an appendix to 3 Enoch; §734, where it is associated with *Shi’ur komah* traditions; and §675, where the pattern is employed as part of a hymn in *Sar-Torah* traditions. On these passages, see Swartz, *Scholastic Magic*, 178–90.

5. See Mordecai Margalit, *Sefer ha-razim: Hu’ sefer keshafim mi-tekfut ha-Talmud* (Jerusalem, 1966), 65–66 (the introductory chapter of the text).

6. On the *Book of Asaph*, see Elinor Lieber, “An Ongoing Mystery: The So-Called ‘Book of Medicines’ Attributed to Asaf the Sage,” *Bulletin of Judaean-Greek Studies* 9 (1991): 18–25; and Lieber, “Asaf’s *Book of Medicines*: A Hebrew Encyclopedia of Greek and Jewish Medicine, Possibly Compiled in Byzantium on an Indian Model,” *DOP* 38 (1984): 233–49. Cf. Ludwig Venetianer, *Asaf judaeus: Der älteste medizinische Schriftsteller in hebraischer Sprache* (Strassburg, 1916); Suessman Muntner, *Mavo le-Sefer Asaf ha-Rofe* (Jerusalem, 1967); and Aviv Melzer, “Asaph the Physician—The Man and His Book: A Historical-Philological Study of the Medical Treatise *The Book of Drugs*” (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1972). Melzer published much of a major manuscript of the text; a full edition, however, is still a desideratum. This introduction was published in Adolf Jellinek, ed., *Bet ha-midrash* (Jerusalem, 1967 [1853–1878], 1:155–56, as *Sefer Noah*; see the translation and notes of James C. Vanderkam, *The Book of Jubilees: A Critical Text* (Leuven, 1989), 59–60. On the parallels to this introduction, see also Ithamar Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (Leiden, 1980), 227.

7. On the function of such narratives in magical literature in general, see David Frankfurter, “Narrating Power: The Theory and Practice of the Magical *Historiola* in Ritual Spells,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, ed. M. W. Meyer and P. Mirecki (Leiden, 1995), 457–76.

8. This essay expands on arguments that I have advanced in a previous volume in this series; see Michael D. Swartz, “Judaism and the Idea of Ancient Ritual Theory,” in *Tradition, Diaspora, and Authority*, ed. R. S. Boustany, O. Kosansky, and M. Rustow (Philadelphia, 2011), 294–317. See also Swartz, “Sage, Priest, and Poet: Typologies of Leadership in the Ancient Synagogue,” in *Jews, Christians and Polytheists in the Ancient Synagogue: Cultural Interaction during the Greco-Roman Period*, ed. S. Fine (London, 1999), 101–17; and Swartz, “Liturgy, Poetry, and the Persistence of Sacrifice,” in *Was 70 C.E. a Watershed in Jewish History?*, ed. D. R. Schwartz and Z. Weiss (Leiden, 2011), 392–414.

9. Henry A. Fischel, “The Uses of Sorites (*Climax*, *Gradatio*) in the Tannaitic Period,” *HUCA* 44 (1973): 119–51; Elias Bickerman, “La chaîne de la tradition pharisienne,” *RevB* 59 (1952): 44–54; and Saldarini, *Scholastic Rabbinism*, 19–21.

10. See Yitzhak Heinemann, *Darkhe ha-agadah* (Jerusalem, 1970), 30; Fischel, “The Uses of Sorites,” 124–26; and Swartz, *Scholastic Magic*, 197–98.

11. Fischel, “The Uses of Sorites,” 126, citing Eusebius, *HE* 2.1.4.

12. Fischel, “The Uses of Sorites,” 126.

13. Tropper, *Wisdom, Politics, and Historiography*.

14. *Ibid.*, 154–56, also traces the relative silence of rabbinic literature on the fourth- and fifth-century patriarchs to the decline of the Second Sophistic.

15. Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 84–86.

16. Tropper, *Wisdom, Politics, and Historiography*, 208–40.

17. On the function of portrayals of succession for polemics among early Christian communities, see Annette Yoshiko Reed, “‘Jewish Christianity’ as Counter-History? The Apostolic Past in Eusebius’ *Ecclesiastical History* and the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies*,” in *Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. G. Gardner and K. L. Osterloh (Tübingen, 2008), 173–216.

18. Fraade, *From Tradition to Commentary*, 70–71, 232; Herr, “Ha-retsef she-be-salshet mesirat ha-Torah,” 43–56; and Louis Finkelstein, *Mavo le-masekhtot Avot ve-Avot de-Rabbi Natan* (New York, 1950), xxix.

19. Michael E. Stone, “The Axis of History at Qumran,” in *Pseudepigraphic Perspectives: The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. E. G. Chazon and M. Stone (Leiden, 1999), 133–49. Thus, according to Stone, in the Qumran fragments of *Testament of Kabat*, this knowledge is in the form of books as well as other cultic traditions.

20. See Thomas R. Lee, *Studies in the Form of Sirach 44–50* (Atlanta, 1986); Otto Mulder, *Simon*

the High Priest in Sirach 50: An Exegetical Study of the Significance of Simon the High Priest as Climax to the Praise of the Fathers in Ben Sira's Concept of the History of Israel (Leiden, 2003); and Cecil Roth, "Ecclesiasticus in the Synagogue Service," *JBL* 71.3 (1952): 171–78.

21. Gk. *aigeia*; on these terms, see Theodor-Albeck's commentary ad loc.
22. Gk. *lagos*.
23. Gk. *sisuron*.
24. Gk. *galaktinon*.
25. R. Samuel bar Nahman is evidently arguing that the garments were not hides but wool from those animals. This may indicate a distinction between having to kill and skin an animal and simply shearing its wool.
26. Ed. J. Theodor and Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabbah* (2nd ed.; Jerusalem: Wahrman, 1965), 196–97. For more on this motif, see Gary A. Anderson, "The Garments of Skin in Apocryphal Narrative and Biblical Commentary," in *Studies in Ancient Midrash*, ed. J. Kugel (Cambridge, 2000), 101–43.
27. Anderson, "Garments of Skin," 116–18.
28. See Tanḥuma Buber, *Toledot* 4.
29. Cf. bZeb 112b.
30. The detail about Esau depositing it with his mother serves to explain why, according to Gen 27.15, it was "with her in the house."
31. In another midrash (GenR 63.13; ed. Theodor-Albeck, 697), the cloak has the power to attract animals and is stolen by Nimrod and passed down to Esau. See Heinemann, *Darkhe ha-agadah*, 30.
32. On the vestments, see Michael D. Swartz, *The Signifying Creator: Nontextual Sources of Meaning in Ancient Judaism* (New York, 2012), 33–54.
33. For an introduction to the 'Avodah as well as texts and translations of the major early 'Avodah compositions, see Michael D. Swartz and Joseph Yahalom, *Avodah: An Anthology of Ancient Poetry for Yom Kippur* (University Park, Pa., 2005) and the bibliography there; all translations and line numbers of 'Avodah piyutim here are from this volume except for *Az be-da'at hakar*, published in Aharon Mirsky, *Piyute Yose ben Yose*, 222–39. A comprehensive study of the 'Avodah service and piyutim from the perspective of the history of Hebrew literature is Zvi Malachi, "Ha-'avodah le-Yom ha-Kipurim: Ofiyah, toledoteha ve-hitpathuta ba-shirah ha-'Ivrit" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, 1974). For further editions and discussions of 'Avodah piyutim, see Joseph Yahalom, *Az be-en kol: Seder ha-'Avodah ha-erets-Yisraeli ha-kadum le-Yom ha-Kipurim* (Jerusalem, 1996); Daniel Goldschmidt, ed., *Mahzor le-Yamim Nora'im*, vol. 2: Ashkenaz (Jerusalem, 1970), 18–25; and Mirsky, *Piyute Yose ben Yose*.
34. Published in Ismar Elbogen, *Studien zur Geschichte des jüdischen Gottesdienstes* (Berlin, 1907), 103–17; cf. the edition in Malachi, "Ha-'avodah le-Yom ha-Kipurim," 2:127–31. For a text and translation, see Swartz and Yahalom, *Avodah*, 53–67.
35. Published in Malachi, "Ha-'avodah le-Yom ha-Kipurim," 1:113–15; and Swartz and Yahalom, *Avodah*, 43–51.
36. Published in Goldschmidt, *Mahzor*, 2:19–23; and Swartz and Yahalom, *Avodah*, 69–93.
37. Yahalom, *Az be-en kol*; an improved edition and translation appear in Swartz and Yahalom, *Avodah*, 95–219.
38. Mirsky, *Piyute Yose ben Yose*; and Swartz and Yahalom, *Avodah*, 221–341.
39. See Michael Rand, "The Seder Beriyot in Byzantine-Era Piyut," *JQR* 95.4 (2005): 667–83.
40. On this point, see Swartz, "Judaism and the Idea of Ancient Ritual Theory."
41. *Atah barata*, Yahalom and Swartz, *Avodah*, 46–47.
42. *Atah barata*, Yahalom and Swartz, *Avodah*, 46–47; cf. GenR 56.5 (ed. Theodor-Albeck, 600–601).

43. Israel.
44. Yom Kippur.
45. On this motif, see Swartz and Yahalom, *Avodah*, 30–34; and Michael D. Swartz, “Bubbling Blood and Rolling Bones: Agency and Teleology in Rabbinic Myth,” in *Antike Mythen: Medien, Transformationen und Konstruktionen*, ed. C. Walde and U. Dill (Berlin, 2009), 224–41; and Swartz, *Signifying Creator*.
46. On the *historiola*, see Frankfurter, “Narrating Power”; and Swartz, *Scholastic Magic*, 65–66.
47. Swartz and Yahalom, *Avodah*, 70–71.
48. Heb. *yegia ‘-kapekha*; cf. Job 10.3, where Job asks God, “Does it benefit you to despise the work of your hands?”
49. See Eccles 7.26.
50. Adam.
51. Mirsky, *Piyute Yose ben Yose*, 226; my translation.
52. See Prov 30.19.
53. Heb., *hekhin le-edo*.
54. This allusion may also be a sign of the poet’s awareness of the midrash found in bYeb 63a, in which Adam tried to mate with other animals before Eve was created.
55. Unfortunately, the portion of *Az be-en kol* that might have filled the gap between Abraham and Aaron is missing. Those fragmentary passages that allude to Moses are discussed below.
56. Heb. *nefilim* (Gen 6.4), playing on the root *n-p-l*, to fall.
57. An idol; cf. Isa 44.13.
58. God; cf. Ps 91.1.
59. Heb., *be-ezeh*: cf. Lev 16.3.
60. Referring to the high priest, who wears eight garments to the ordinary priest’s four.
61. Abraham.
62. Levi (the third son); Heb., *le-shalesh*. Alternatively, one might emend to *le-shamesh* (to serve).
63. Swartz and Yahalom, *Avodah*, 48–51.
64. Referring to the priesthood.
65. Swartz and Yahalom, *Avodah*, 72–74.
66. The only episode in the history of Israel between Moses and the establishment of the Jerusalem Temple mentioned in the surviving text from this section of *Az be-en kol* is a fragmentary reference in lines 531–33 to the punishment of Achan in Josh 7.19–26. This, like the reference to Numbers 17, alludes to an instance of Israel’s transgression.
67. Egypt.
68. Water; see Isa 40.12.
69. Wisdom or Torah, based on Prov 8.31.
70. Aaron.
71. Moses.
72. Miriam; see Exod 15.20. She is called “maiden,” presumably because she apparently did not take a husband.
73. Miriam.
74. According to bMK 28a, Miriam died by the kiss of God, as did Moses and Aaron.
75. When Miriam died, the well ceased. See tSot 11.1; SifreDeut, §205 (Louis Finkelstein, ed., *Sifre ‘al Sefer Devarim* [New York, 1969]); and bTa‘an 9a.
76. The gate of the Tabernacle during the ceremony of ordination; see Lev 8.35.
77. See 2 Chron 26.16–21.

78. See Num 16.2.
79. I.e., the priests.
80. Uzziah's name literally means "the power of God."
81. See Yahalom, *Az be-en kol*, 16–19; Swartz, "Judaism and the Idea of Ancient Ritual Theory"; and Swartz, "Sage, Priest, and Poet."
82. Münz-Manor, in this volume.
83. Derek Krueger, "The Liturgical Creation of a Christian Past: Identity and Community in Anaphoral Prayers," in *Unclassical Traditions: Alternatives to the Classical Past in Late Antiquity*, ed. C. Kelly, M. Williams, and R. Flower (Cambridge, 2010), 1:58–71. My thanks to Professor Krueger for showing me this article in advance of publication and for his thoughtful comments on an earlier version of this chapter.
84. Quoted and translated in Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (Cambridge, 1975), 179.
85. Ibid., 179–80, where Murray also quotes a salvation history in the same hymn in which the tradition is "handed down" from Adam to Noah and through the history of Israel in greater detail, stating that Ephraim sees that history as "more of a family affair."
86. I.e., Christ.
87. My thanks to Professor Kristina Sessa for pointing out this source to me.
88. On this point, see Swartz, "Judaism and the Idea of Ancient Ritual Theory"; and Swartz, "Liturgy, Poetry, and the Persistence of Sacrifice."
89. Joseph Yahalom, *Piyut u-metsi'ut ba-zeman ha-'atik* (Tel Aviv, 1999), 107–36; Oded Irshai, "The Role of the Priesthood in the Jewish Community in Late Antiquity: A Christian Model?," in *Jüdische Gemeinden und ihr christlicher Kontext in kulturräumlich vergleichender Betrachtung: Von der Spätantike bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. C. Cluse, A. Haverkamp, and I. J. Yuval (Hannover, 2003), 75–85; see also the following note.
90. On these *piyutim*, see Paul Kahle, *Masoreten des Westens* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1927), 81–87, 1*–59*, and 1–23 (Heb. section); and Menahem Zulay, "Le-toledot ha-piyut be-Erets-Yisrael," *Yedi'ot ha-makhon le-heker ha-shirah ha-'Ivrit* 5 (1939): 107–80. See Ezra Fleischer, "Shiva'tot ḥadashot 'al mishmarot ha-kehunah la-payetan Rabbi Pinḥas," *Sinai* 61 (1967): 30–56; "Le'-inyan ha-mishmarot ba-piyutim," *Sinai* 62 (1968): 13–40; and "Piyut le-Yanai Hazan 'al mishmarot ha-kohanim," *Sinai* 64 (1969): 176–84. And see Joseph Yahalom, "The Temple and the City in Liturgical Hebrew Poetry," in *The History of Jerusalem: The Early Muslim Period, 638–1099*, ed. J. Prawer and H. Ben-Shammai (New York, 1996), 274–75. Cf. Samuel Klein, *Beiträge zur Geographie und Geschichte Galiläas* (Leipzig, 1909), 64–70.
91. See Zeev Weiss, *The Sepphoris Synagogue: Deciphering an Ancient Message through Its Archaeological and Socio-Historical Contexts* (Jerusalem, 2005). Weiss argues that depictions of the priesthood and the details of the sacrificial system reflect increased eschatological hopes for the restoration of the Temple. Steven Fine, however, argues against the programmatic implications of such a reading; see Steven Fine, "Art and the Liturgical Context of the Sepphoris Synagogue Mosaic," in *Galilee through the Centuries*, ed. E. M. Meyers (Winona Lake, Ind., 1999), 227–23. Recently, Stuart Miller made a similar argument for inscriptions of the *mishmarot*; see Stuart S. Miller, "Priests, Purities, and the Jews of Galilee," in *Religion, Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Galilee: A Region in Transition*, ed. J. Zangenberg, H. W. Attridge, and D. B. Martin (Tübingen, 2007), 375–402. Other symbols of messianic ideology, especially symbols of Davidic kingship, are noticeably missing in these sources. See also Talgam, in this volume.
92. See Dalia Trifon, "Did the Priestly Courses [*Mishmarot*] Transfer from Judaea to Galilee after the Bar Kokhba Revolt?" (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 59.1/2 (1989–90): 77–93; cf. Zeev Safrai, "Matat 'avru

ha-kohanim la-Galil? Teguvah le-ma'amarah shel Dalia Trifon," *Tarbiz* 62 (1993): 287–92; S. Miller, "Priests, Purities, and the Jews of Galilee"; and Steven Fine, "Between Liturgy and Social History: Priestly Power in Late Antique Palestinian Synagogues," *JJS* 56.1 (2005): 1–9.

93. See Ra'anan Boustán, *From Martyr to Mystic: Rabbinic Martyrology and the Making of Merkavah Mysticism* (Tübingen, 2005), 99–147. While there is firm evidence that priests were among the *payetanim*, it is not clear whether there is sufficient evidence to argue for priestly authorship of Hekhalot literature; cf. Rachel Elior, *The Three Temples: On the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism* (Oxford, 2005).

94. On rabbinic attestations to the priesthood after 70, see Seth Schwartz, *Josephus and Judean Politics* (Leiden, 1990), 96–107; and Catherine Hezser, *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine* (Tübingen, 1997), 480–89.

95. On allusions to Christianity in Yose ben Yose, see Daniel Stökl ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity: The Day of Atonement from Second Temple Judaism to the Fifth Century* (Tübingen, 2003), 283–88; for Yannai, see, e.g., Tzvi Meir Rabinovitz, *Mahzor piyute Rabi Yanai la-Torah ve-la-mo'adim* (Jerusalem, 1985), 2:221–22.

96. See Laura S. Lieber, *Yannai on Genesis: An Invitation to Piyyut* (Cincinnati, 2010), 224–25, 270–85; and Wout J. van Bekkum, "Anti-Christian Polemics in Hebrew Liturgical Poetry (Piyyut) in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries," in *Early Christian Poetry: A Collection of Essays*, ed. J. den Boeft and A. Hilhorst (Leiden, 1993), 297–308.

CHAPTER 11

In memory of my teacher Abraham (Addi) Wasserstein.

I wish to thank the two editors of the present volume for their undefeatable patience and the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania for the wonderful term spent in distinguished company on the top floor of the center in 2008. I owe a great debt to Dr. Rachel Stroumsa for sharing with me the manuscripts of two unpublished lectures—"Greek and Arabic in Nessana" and "Imperial Presence in Flux: Changes and Continuities in Nessana, before and after the Arab Conquest"—and for discussing with me in detail the present chapter. She has been a source of inspiration.

1. The two, *P.Yadin* 18 and *P.Yadin* 37 (= *P.Hever* 65; see below), were published in Naphtali Lewis, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Greek Papyri* (Jerusalem, 1989). However, Lewis realized that *P.Yadin* 37 did not belong with the other documents, all of which were part of the celebrated Babatha Archive (see there p. 130). It was later identified as part of the less well known archive of Salome Komaïse daughter of Levi. A revised edition of the papyrus appeared first in Hannah M. Cotton, "The Archive of Salome Komaïse Daughter of Levi: Another Archive from the 'Cave of Letters,'" *ZPE* 105 (1995): 204–7 (where it is still *P.Yadin* 37), and in its final form, now designated *P.Hever* 65, in Hannah M. Cotton and Ada Yardeni, *Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Texts from Nahal Hever and Other Sites, with an Appendix Containing Alleged Qumran Texts (The Seiyāl Collection II)*, DJD 27 (Oxford, 1997), 224–37. See detailed explanation for the genesis of the so-called Seiyāl Collection in the general introduction to the volume, 1–6. All the papyri designated *P.Hever* belong to this volume, to distinguish them from *P.Yadin*, also found in Nahal Hever but designated after their discoverer; see Hannah M. Cotton, "Documentary Texts from the Judean Desert: A Matter of Nomenclature," *SCI* 20 (2001): 114–17.

2. These are *P.Nessana* 18 and 20, respectively, published in Casper J. Kraemer, *Excavations at Nessana (Auja Hafir, Palestine)*, vol. 3: *Non-Literary Papyri* (Princeton, N.J., 1958).

3. For *Mur* 20 and 21, see P. Benoit, J. T. Milik, and R. de Vaux, *Les Grottes de Murabba'at*, DJD 2 (Oxford, 1961). For *P.Yadin* 10, see Y. Yadin et al., *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Hebrew, Aramaic and Nabatean Aramaic Papyri* (Jerusalem, 2002).

4. This conclusion is supported by three more marriage contracts written in Greek from the Judean Desert: *Mur* 115 (124 CE) and 116 (unknown date, probably second century) and *P.Hever* 69 (130 CE)—none of which can be said to be a translation of an Aramaic *ketubah*. All of them resemble in spirit and in phraseology contemporary Greek marriage contracts from Egypt. The crucial formula “that you will be my wife according to the law of Moses and the Jews” is absent from all of them; cf. Hannah M. Cotton, “A Cancelled Marriage Contract from the Judean Desert, *XHev/Se Gr. 2*,” *JRS* 84 (1994): 64–86 (*XHev/Se Gr. 2* was the Rockefeller Museum inventory number for *P.Hever* 69). It must be acknowledged that, unlike the Greek documents from Arabia (*P.Yadin* 18 and *P.Hever* 65), the three Greek marriage contracts from Judaea, as well as the Aramaic marriage contracts from Arabia and Judaea (*P.Yadin* 10 and *Mur* 20 and 21), draw a distinction between male and female children as heirs to their mother’s property. I believe that the provision concerning male children as heirs to their mother’s property entered Jewish law under the influence of other Near Eastern traditions and was meant to protect sons in polygamous marriages against the loss of part of their mother’s property to sons of another woman; see Cotton on *P.Hever* 69, in Cotton and Yardeni, *Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Texts from Nahal Hever*, 270–73.

5. Hannah M. Cotton, “Continuity of Nabataean Law in the Petra Papyri: A Methodological Exercise,” in *From Hellenism to Islam: Cultural and Linguistic Change in the Roman Near East*, ed. H. M. Cotton et al. (Cambridge, 2009), 154–74.

6. Although I still believe this conclusion to be true, I have now come to prefer Jacobine Oudshoorn’s explanation—that women were the sole recipients of deeds of gifts in the documents from the Judean desert—to the one I offer there (“Continuity of Nabataean Law,” n. 5) and elsewhere; rather than deny them the right to inherit, she claims—rightly, I believe—that the change of legal status from an unmarried to a married woman was at stake. Cf. Jacobine G. Oudshoorn, *The Relationship between Roman and Local Law in the Babatha and Salome Komaise Archives: General Analysis and Three Case Studies on Law of Succession, Guardianship, and Marriage* (Leiden, 2007), chap. 4.

7. Fergus Millar, “The Problem of Hellenistic Syria,” 1987, reprinted in Millar, *Rome, the Greek World and the East*, ed. H. M. Cotton and G. M. Rogers (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2006), 3:3–31; cf. Hannah M. Cotton, “Language Gaps in Roman Palestine and the Roman Near East,” in *Medien der Alltagskultur Realien und kulturelle Kommunikation als Thema der Palästinaarchäologie*, ed. C. Frevel (Tübingen, 2005), 165–67.

8. So Naphtali Lewis, in “The Demise of the Aramaic Document in the Dead Sea Region,” *SCI* 20 (2001): 179–81.

9. Cf. Hannah M. Cotton, “Survival, Adaptation and Extinction: Nabataean and Jewish Aramaic versus Greek in the Legal Documents from the Cave of Letters in Nahal Hever,” in *Sprache und Kultur in der kaiserzeitlichen Provinz Arabia*, ed. L. Schumacher and O. Stoll (St. Katharinen, 2003), 1–11.

10. Although I accept 140 CE as the date of the recently published Hebrew *P.Beit Israel*, certainty is denied; see Esther Eshel, Hanan Eshel, and Ada Yardeni, “A Document from ‘Year 4 of the Destruction of the House of Israel’” (Hebrew), *Cathedra* 132 (2009): 5–24 (for an English version, see *DSD* 18 [2011]: 1–28). Unlike the first editors, Moshe Bar-Asher, “The Language of the *Beit ‘Amar* Document” (Hebrew), *Cathedra* 132 (2009): 25–32, maintains that the document is written in Aramaic rather than Hebrew. I no longer accept the dating in Hannah M. Cotton, Walter Cockle, and Fergus Millar, “The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey,” *JRS* 85 (1995): 214–35, of no. 332 (*P.Mur* 116) and nos.

336–37 (*PMur* 113 and 114), all in Greek, to the period after 136 CE: see Hannah M. Cotton and Werner Eck, “*P. Murabba’at* 114 und die Anwesenheit römischer Truppen in den Höhlen des Wadi Murabba’at nach dem Bar Kochba Aufstand,” *ZPE* 138 (2002): 173–83; the other documents, nos. 333–35 and nos. 338–42—in Latin and Greek—are doubtful cases.

11. Nessana and Petra belonged in the sixth century to Palaestina Salutaris/Tertia, which included southern Jordan, the Negev, and the Sinai—territories that belonged to the Nabataean kingdom when it was redacted into the province of Arabia.

12. Naphtali Lewis, Ranon Katzoff, and Jonas Greenfield, “Papyrus Yadin 18,” *IEJ* 37.4 (1987): 229–50.

13. Abraham Wasserstein, “A Marriage Contract from the Province of Arabia Nova: Notes on Papyrus Yadin 18,” *JQR* 80.1/2 (1989): 93–130.

14. A. Wasserstein, “Marriage Contract,” 130: “Its various ethnic elements are affected both by each other and by their common heritage, and after the irruption of Greek power and civilization they become, in various degrees ‘Hellenized.’ But ‘Hellenism’ as a cultural phenomenon, differs from its classical Greek antecedent in the fact that it has itself absorbed vastly important elements of local culture, which it clothed with the name and the language of the Hellenes. This is true in many fields; it is particularly evident in law and custom.” For, as Wasserstein claims in “Non-Hellenized Jews in the Semi-Hellenized East,” *SCI* 14 (1995): 130, “Alongside [Hellenistic civilization] . . . and sometimes intermingling with it, there existed another supra-natural civilisation, influenced indeed by the encounter with the Greeks (and, later, with the Romans), but formed, and informed and characterised by the common Aramaic inheritance that had existed for many centuries before then as an international and supra-national bond for people of many nations, not all of them Semitic.”

15. A. Wasserstein, “A Marriage Contract,” 120.

16. See Appendix 1 of this chapter for the outer text and translation.

17. The above is a paraphrase of lines 32–54 of the outer text = 3–19 of the inner text, but the crucial lines, quoted above (47–54, outer text = 14–19, inner text) should be given in Greek as well: ὁ ὁμολόγησεν (the groom) . . . δοῦναι αὐτῇ (the bride) . . . ἀκολουθῶς αἰρέσει τροφῆς καὶ ἀμφιασμοῦ αὐτῆς τε καὶ τῶν μελλόντων τέκνων ἐλληνικῷ νόμῳ ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰοῦ[δα Κίμβερος πίστεως καὶ κινδύνου καὶ πάντων ὑπαρχόντων ὧν τε ἔχει ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐνθ’ ἄδε καὶ ὧν ἂν ἐπικτήσῃται πάντῃ πάντων κυρίως.

18. See Appendix 2 of this chapter for my edition of *PHever* 65 and translation.

19. See bibliography in Cotton ad *PHever* 65 (n. 1), esp. Hans Julius Wolff, *Written and Unwritten Marriages in Hellenistic and Post-Classical Roman Law* (Haverford, Pa., 1939).

20. ὁμολογήσατο Ἰησοῦς Μαναήμου τ[ὸν ἀπὸ κώμης . . . Σοφραθε[. . .] . . . περὶ πόλιν Λιουιάδος τῆς Π[εραίας] . . . πρὸς(?) Σαλ[ωμην καλομένην] Κ[ομαίσην] Ληουείου τῆν[] γυναῖκα, Μ[α]ωζηνὴν ὅστε αὐτοὺς . . . συμβίωσ[. . .] αὐτῆς ὥ[ς] κ[αὶ] πρὸ τούτου τοῦ χρόνου (lines 3–6).

21. ὁ ὁμολογήσατο ὁ γήμης [ἀπ]εσχικ[έν]αι παρ’ αὐτῆς . . . σὺν αἰρέσει τροφῆς [καὶ ἀμφιασμοῦ αὐτῆς] τε καὶ τῶν μελλόντων τέκνων νόμῳ ἐλληνικῷ καὶ ἐλλ[η]νικῷ τρόπῳ ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦς πίστεως καὶ κινδύνου πάντων ὑπαρχόντων αὐτοῦ ὧν τε ἔχει ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ Σοφ[ραθε] . . . καὶ ὧν ἂν ἐπικτήσῃται . . . σ[. . .] ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐτοῦ πάντῃ (lines 7–12). The massive restorations are safe: there is no difference between Lewis and Cotton editions.

22. A study of the role of the notaries in shaping the law is still to be written, as pointed out long ago by Elias J. Bickerman, “Two Legal Interpretations of the Septuagint,” in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History*, ed. E. J. Bickerman (Leiden, 1976), 1:201–24 at 207.

23. Naphtali Lewis, “The World of *P. Yadin*,” *BASP* 28.1–2 (1991): 40–41.

24. A. Wasserstein, "A Marriage Contract," 125.
25. Ibid.
26. Mordechai Akiva Friedman, *Jewish Marriage in Palestine: A Cairo Geniza Study*, 2 vols. (Tel Aviv, 1980), 1:15.
27. The insight and the phrasing are Rachel Stroumsa's, in a private exchange.
28. Both published in Benoit, Milik, and de Vaux, *Les Grottes de Murabba'at*.
29. Published like the rest of *PHever* in Cotton and Yardeni, *Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Texts from Nahal Hever*.
30. Unfortunately, it does not seem possible to restore the "in accordance with Greek law" after the acknowledgment of the handsome dowry and the obligation to look after her and the children, and before the liability clause that earmarks the husband's entire property as security for his wife's maintenance.
31. 537 CE and 558 CE, respectively.
32. To the extent that it was restored at all.
33. David J. Wasserstein, "Why Did Arabic Succeed Where Greek Failed? Language Change in the Near East after Muhammad," *SCI* 22 (2003): 257–72; and Robert Hoyland, "Language and Identity: The Twin Histories of Arabic and Aramaic (and: Why Did Aramaic Succeed Where Greek Failed?)," *SCI* 23 (2004): 183–99.
34. Rachel Stroumsa, "People and Identities in Nessana" (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 2008); the author very kindly bestowed on me a copy of her unpublished dissertation.
35. Cf. *SEG* 31.122 (Attica ii AD): τὸν ἐξ ἔθνους τριῶν μυριάδων; Modest. *Dig.* 50.12.10, κατὰ τὰ Ῥωμαίων.
36. See Appendix 3 of this chapter for text and translation. For the first eleven lines, I offer a new and precise translation, based on Ranon Katzoff and Naphtali Lewis's excellent emendations in "Understanding *P.Ness.* 18," *ZPE* 84 (1990): 211–13. For the rest, I have left the paraphrase of the first edition.

CHAPTER 12

1. Shmuel Safrai, "The Temple and the Synagogue" (Hebrew), in *Synagogues in Antiquity*, ed. A. Kasher, A. Oppenheimer, and U. Rappaport (Jerusalem, 1987), 31–52; Steven Fine, *This Holy Place: On the Sanctity of the Synagogue during the Greco-Roman Period* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1997), 49–59, 79–83; Joseph Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud: Forms and Patterns* (Berlin, 1977), 14–15; and Lee I. Levine, "The Development of Synagogue Liturgy in Late Antiquity," in *Galilee through the Centuries: Confluence of Cultures*, ed. E. M. Meyers (Winona Lake, Ind., 1999), 123–44.
2. See also Swartz and Münz-Manor, in this volume.
3. Elchanan Reiner, "Destruction, Temple, and Sacred Place: On the Medieval Perception of Time and Place" (Hebrew), *Cathedra* 97 (2001): 54–55.
4. Joseph Yahalom, "The Temple and the City in Liturgical Hebrew Poetry," in *The History of Jerusalem: The Early Muslim Period, 638–1099*, ed. J. Prawer and H. Ben-Shammai (New York, 1996), 274–75; Michael Avi-Yonah, "The Caesarea Inscription of the 24 Priestly Courses" (Hebrew), *ErIsr* 7 (1964): 24–28; Joseph Naveh, *On Stone and Mosaic: The Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from Ancient Synagogues* (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1978), 87–88; and Hanan Eshel, "A Fragmentary Inscription of the Priestly Courses?" (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 61 (1991): 159–61.
5. Carl H. Kraeling, *The Synagogue (Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Report 8, Pt. 1)* (New

Haven, Conn., 1956), 54–62; and Kurt Weitzmann and Herbert L. Kessler, *The Frescoes of the Dura Synagogue and Christian Art* (Washington, D.C., 1990), 155–57.

6. Kraeling, *The Synagogue*, 105–17, 125–33; and Weitzmann and Kessler, *The Frescoes of the Dura Synagogue*, 55–63, 98.

7. This mosaic floor was preceded by another mosaic that has scarcely been preserved, so we have no knowledge of how it was decorated; Moshe Dothan, *Hammath Tiberias: Early Synagogues and the Hellenistic and Roman Remains* (Jerusalem, 1983), 33–39.

8. See bMeg 29a: “R. Samuel son of Isaac: ‘I will be unto them a small sanctuary (*mikdash me’at*)’ (Ezek 11.16)—These are synagogues and study houses.”

9. Reiner, “Destruction, Temple, and Sacred Place,” 47–64. Fine rejects the interpretation that the synagogue in Late Antiquity was regarded symbolically as a temple; Steven Fine, “Did the Synagogue Replace the Temple?” *BRev* 12.2 (1996): 18–26; and Fine, *This Holy Place*, 112–21.

10. This feature is especially reflected in chaps. 8, 10, and 12 of the work; see Robert Kirschner, *Baraita de-melekhet ha-mishkan: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Translation* (Cincinnati, 1992), 14, 73, 76, 82. Kirschner also notices a fusion of Tabernacle and Temple models in the Temple Scroll.

11. Kirschner, *Baraita de-melekhet ha-mishkan*, 81.

12. The destroyed Temple stands at the core of John Chrysostom’s *Discourse* 5.11–12 in his *Adversus Iudaeos*; this text and additional examples are discussed in Annabel J. Wharton, “Erasure: Eliminating the Space of Late Ancient Judaism,” in *From Dura Euorpos to Sepphoris: Studies in Jewish Art and Society in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. I. Levine and Z. Weiss (Portsmouth, R.I., 2000), 195–214. See also Judith Lieu, “History and Theology in Christian Views of Judaism,” in *The Jews among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire*, ed. J. Lieu, J. North, and T. Rajak (London, 1992), 79–96; and Joshua Prawer, “Christian Attitudes toward Jerusalem in the Early Middle Ages,” in *The History of Jerusalem*, ed. Prawer and Ben-Shammai, 311–47.

13. For a discussion, see Steven Fine, “From Meeting House to Sacred Realm, Holiness and the Ancient Synagogue,” in *Sacred Realm: The Emergence of the Synagogue in the Ancient World*, ed. S. Fine (New York, 1996), 21–47.

14. John Wilkinson, *Egeria’s Travels* (3rd ed.; Warminster, 1999), 48.

15. Ora Limor, *Holy Land Travels: Christian Pilgrims in Late Antiquity* (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1998), 9–11.

16. Michel van Esbroeck, “Une homélie sur l’église attribuée à Jean de Jérusalem,” *Le Muséon* 86.3–4 (1973): 283–304.

17. Christine Smith, “Christian Rhetoric in Eusebius’ Panegyric at Tyre,” *VigChr* 43.3 (1989): 226–47.

18. Cyril A. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972), 57–58.

19. *Ibid.*, 72.

20. Andrew Palmer, “The Inauguration Anthem of Hagia Sophia in Edessa: A New Edition and Architectural Notes and a Comparison with a Contemporary Constantinopolitan Kontakion,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 12 (1988): 117–68, esp. 145–46, 150.

21. R. Martin Harrison, *A Temple for Byzantium: The Discovery and Excavation of Anicia Juliana’s Palace-Church in Istanbul* (London, 1989), 137–39. The poem inscribed in the church claimed that Anicia Juliana alone had conquered time and surpassed the wisdom of celebrated Solomon, raising a temple to receive God. On the prominent place of the Temple in the metaphorical language of Byzantine architecture, see Robert Ousterhout, “New Temples and New Solomons: The Rhetoric of Byzantine Architecture,” in *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, ed. P. Magdalino and R. Nelson (Washington,

D.C., 2010), 223–305. Ousterhout claims that the connection of the church and the Temple has been made by metaphors and ceremonies rather than by specific architectural forms.

22. Sylvester Saller held the view that the artist who planned the design for the pavement intended to represent the Temple that existed in Jerusalem up to 70 CE. He identified the rectangular shape ending in an arch that bounds the depiction as the great gate leading into the Women's Court. The small rectangular space in the foreground of the depiction is, in his opinion, the Women's Court, beyond which is the Court of the Priests and its sacrificial altar. In the tetrastyle facade standing in this court, he saw the facade of the Temple with a doorway leading to the Holy of Holies; Sylvester Saller, *The Memorial of Moses on Mount Nebo*, 3 vols. (Jerusalem, 1941–1950), 1:233–38. My view is different: the designer of the mosaic floor was probably referring to Solomon's Temple and not that of the Second Temple period, which was intentionally ignored by Christian authors at that time when referring to the Jewish Temple as a model. See Oded Irshai, "Historical Aspects of the Christian-Jewish Polemic concerning the Church of Jerusalem in the Fourth Century (In the Light of Patristic and Rabbinic Literature)" (Hebrew; Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1993), 27–28.

23. Herbert L. Kessler, "Medieval Art as Argument," in *Iconography at the Crossroads*, ed. B. Cassidy (Princeton, N.J., 1993), 61.

24. Saller, *Memorial of Moses*, 1:254–55.

25. Robin M. Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art* (London, 2000), 136.

26. In this text, which is repeated in *Adversus Iudaeos* 10.37–50, Tertullian comments on Deut 33.17 (the blessing of Moses to the children of Israel shortly before his death on Mount Nebo): Moses praises Joseph, saying, "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock"; P. Azara, "The Golden Calf: The Bull in the Collective Imagination of the Ancient Mediterranean," in *The Bull in the Mediterranean World: Myths and Cults*, ed. S. Athanassopoulou and Y. Tzedakis (Athens, 2003), 24–48.

27. John I. McEnerney, trans., *The Letters of St. Cyril of Alexandria, Letters 1–50* (Washington, D.C., 1987), 180–81; and Kessler, "Medieval Art as Argument," 59–60.

28. Michele Piccirillo and Eugenio Alliata, *Mount Nebo: New Archaeological Excavations, 1967–1997*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem, 1998), 1:359–63.

29. S. Gutman, Z. Yeivin, and E. Netzer, "Excavations in the Synagogue at Ḥorvat Susiya," in *Ancient Synagogues Revealed*, ed. L. I. Levine (Jerusalem, 1981), 123–28.

30. The difference between Jewish and Christian use of shared representations of the Tabernacle, the Temple, and the sacrifices is discussed by Herbert L. Kessler, "The Sepphoris Mosaic and Christian Art," in *From Dura Europos to Sepphoris*, ed. Levine and Weiss, 69–70.

31. Piccirillo and Alliata, *Mount Nebo*, 1:359–63.

32. In the *Life of Sabas* (80.5–12), Cyril of Scythopolis mentions a woman who donated two curtains for the Castellion (el-Mird) and Cave monasteries.

33. Kessler, "Medieval Art as Argument," 64–65.

34. Amnon Linder, "Discussion: Jerusalem between Judaism and Christianity in the Byzantine Period" (Hebrew), *Cathedra* 11 (1979): 110–19, esp. 117–18.

35. See also the discussions of Pauline Donceel-Voûte, *Les pavements des églises byzantines de Syrie et du Liban: Décor, archéologie et liturgie* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1988), 1:485–88; and Henry Maguire, "Paradise Withdrawn" [2002], repr. in *Image and Imagination in Byzantine Art* (Burlington, Vt., 2007), 23–35.

36. On the symbolic journey of the believers participating in the present-day church liturgy, where Adam's sin is the cause of death and labor, see Karel C. Innemée, "Topographical Elements in Floor Mosaics in Jordan and Syria," *Essays on Christian Art and Culture in the Middle East* 3 (2000): 20–28.

37. Guy Stroumsa explains that the centrality of Jesus Christ in Christianity weakened the weight of eschatology, since the central messianic expectation had already been fulfilled; G. G. Stroumsa, “*In Illo Loco: Paradise Lost in Early Christian Mythology*,” in *Genesis and Regeneration: Essays on Conceptions of Origins*, ed. S. Shaked (Jerusalem, 2005), 110–26. Gerard P. Luttikhuisen, ed., *Paradise Interpreted: Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity* (Leiden, 1999); George H. Williams, *Wilderness and Paradise in Christian Thought* (New York, 1962); and Pierre Miquel, “Paradis, I: Dans la tradition chrétienne,” and Jean-Claude Sagne, “Paradis, II: Le désir du Paradis,” in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité: Ascétique et mystique, doctrine et histoire*, ed. M. Viller (Paris, 1983), vol. 12.1, cols. 187–203.

38. On the reception of the so-called Old Testament pseudepigrapha in early Christian literature, see James M. Scott, *Geography in Early Judaism and Christianity: The Book of Jubilees* (Cambridge, 2002), 3–4: “There was a remarkable continuity of exegetical tradition from the Second-Temple period through the first few centuries of the early Christian period, and the line between ‘Jewish’ and ‘Christian’ is frequently either blurred or non-existent.”

39. Rachel Elior, “Mount Zion Is the Navel of the Earth” (Hebrew), *ErIsr* 28 (2007): 1–13.

40. Gary A. Anderson, “The Cosmic Mountain: Eden and Its Early Interpreters in Syriac Christianity,” in *Genesis 1–3 in the History of Exegesis: Intrigue in the Garden*, ed. G. A. Robbins (Lewiston, N.Y., 1988), 187–224.

41. See Levinson, in this volume.

42. Peter Walker, *Holy City, Holy Places? Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Fourth Century* (Oxford, 1990).

43. Joseph Geiger, “The Spread of Christianity in the Land of Israel from Its Beginning to the Days of Julian” (Hebrew), in *Eretz Israel from the Destruction of the Second Temple to the Muslim Conquest*, vol. 1, ed. Z. Baras et al. (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1982), 228.

44. The only historical source that ascribes the legislation to Constantine comes from Eutychius of Alexandria in the tenth century; see Oded Irshai, “Constantine and the Jews: The Prohibition against Entering Jerusalem—History and Hagiography” (Hebrew), *Zion* 60.2 (1995): 129–78. The author claims that the evidence from the period suggests that Constantine’s main orientation in Jerusalem was anti-pagan and that if there had been a prohibition, it was local and not imperial; it probably emanated from episcopal influence on the governor of Palestine, who may have issued the decree. Be that as it may, there is no record of Jewish residency in the city during the Byzantine period.

45. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 141–42.

46. Cf. Münz-Manor, in this volume.

47. The use of architectural and liturgical *loca sancta* elements to designate the heavenly city characterizes a large group of miniature *eulogia* objects from Jerusalem, such as the metal *ampullae*; see Bianca Kühnel, *From the Earthly to Heavenly Jerusalem: Representations of the Holy City in Christian Art of the First Millennium* (Rome, 1987), 93–107.

48. Michele Piccirillo and Eugenio Alliata, *Umm al-Rasas, Mayfa’ah*, vol. 1: *Gli scavi del complesso di Santo Stefano* (Jerusalem, 1994).

49. Michael Avi-Yonah, *The Madaba Mosaic Map with Introduction and Commentary* (Jerusalem, 1954), 10.

50. The concept of Jerusalem as “the navel of Judaea” is expressed by Josephus (*Jewish War* 3.52), and the city is called “the navel of the world” in the Babylonian Talmud (bSan 37a), but it seems that Jerome was the first to Christianize it (*Comm. Ezek.* 2.5.5–6; CCSL 75, 56; PL 25, 54). In the Babylonian Talmud, this is found in a commentary on the Song of Songs cited in the name of R. Aḥa bar Ḥanina, a Palestinian sage of the second century. For a discussion of this issue, see Susan Weingarten,

The Saint's Saints: Hagiography and Geography in Jerome (Leiden, 2005), 198. The idea of Jerusalem in the center of the world already appears in Ezek 5.5. The center of Jewish Jerusalem was obviously the Temple Mount; see Robert L. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought* (New Haven, Conn., 1992), 94–95.

51. Avi-Yonah, *The Madaba Mosaic Map*, 15.

52. Pauline Donceel-Voùte, “La carte de Madaba: Cosmographie, anachronisme et propagande,” *RevB* 95.4 (1988): 519–42.

53. Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony, *Encountering the Sacred: The Debate on Christian Pilgrimage in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, Calif., 2005)

54. *Ibid.*, 65–105.

55. Jerome, *Praefatio in Librum Paralipomenon*, PL 29, col. 401a; Prawer, “Christian Attitudes,” 321–23; and Bitton-Ashkelony, *Encountering the Sacred*, 69.

56. Jerome, *Ad Paulinum Presbyterum*, CSEL 54, ep. 58.

57. The author of Hebrews (11.9–10) clearly states his view of the status of the Holy Land, and primarily of Jerusalem, when he writes about the strength of faith, which confirms the existence of things unseen and invisible: “By faith, [Abraham] stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.” Further on, he continues: “If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them” (11.15–16; NRSV).

58. On the debate in Late Antiquity as to whether the word “holy” could also be applied to earthly Jerusalem and not only to heavenly Jerusalem, see Wilken, *The Land Called Holy*, 124.

59. Michele Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan* (Amman, 1993), 234.

60. Georgius Cyprius also places Jerusalem at the top of the list, even before the metropolis Caesarea.

61. Sidney H. Griffith, “Theodore Abū Qurrah’s Arabic Tract on the Christian Practice of Venerating Images,” *JAOS* 105.1 (1985): 62–65; and Griffith, “Images, Islam and Christian Icons: A Moment in the Christian/Muslim Encounter in Early Islamic Times,” in *Le Syrie de Byzance à l’Islam VIIe–VIIIe siècles*, ed. P. Canivet and J.-P. Rey-Coquais (Damascus, 1992), 121–38.

62. H. A. R. Gibb, “The Fiscal Rescript of ‘Umar II,” *Arabica* 2.1 (1955): 1–16.

63. Roland De Vaux, “Une mosaïque byzantine à Mâ’in (Transjordanie),” *RevB* 47 (1938): 227–58; and Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan*, 194–201.

64. Leah Di Segni, “Horvath Hesheq—A Unique Church in Upper Galilee: The Inscriptions,” in *Christian Archaeology in the Holy Land: New Discoveries. Essays in Honour of Virgilio C. Corbo, OFM*, ed. G. C. Bottini, L. Di Segni, and E. Alliata (Jerusalem, 1990), 390.

65. As distinct from this, the word “Zion” in the pilgrimage literature at the end of antiquity was generally used as a topographical reference to Mount Zion.

66. C. Smith, “Christian Rhetoric,” 234–36.

67. Ephraim E. Urbach, “Heavenly and Earthly Jerusalem,” in *Jerusalem through the Ages* (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1968), 156–71. See also Victor Aptowitzer, “The Heavenly Temple in the Aggadah” (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 2.1 (1930): 137–53.

CHAPTER 13

I thank my wonderful friend and colleague Ora Limor for her patient willingness to discuss Visigothic vagaries with me at length, no matter how early in the morning, at the Café Masaryk.

1. Pagans might also produce positive stereotypes, to express what they most admired about their own culture: thus, Jews are a nation of philosophers; they worship the high god without resort to images (Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.4), and so on. Later Christian authors such as Origen, in his work *contra Celsum*, deploy positive as well as negative traditions. When Celsus, through the persona of a “Jew,” pronounces criticism of Christianity, Origen responds with a negative (often originally pagan) Jewish stereotype; when Celsus criticizes Judaism, Origen responds using positive stereotypes, some of which derive from Hellenistic Jewish apology.

2. See, most recently and exhaustively, Benjamin H. Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton, N.J., 2004). Part 2 of his study devotes individual chapters to these and other ancient ethnic groups.

3. Greek and Roman remarks on Jews are gathered, translated, and commented upon in Menahem Stern, *Greek and Roman Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 3 vols. (Jerusalem, 1974). For analysis of the negative traditions, see Louis H. Feldman, who breaks them into popular and erudite prejudices, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* (Princeton, N.J., 1993), 107–22, 123–76; and Peter Schäfer, *Judeophobia: Attitudes toward the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997). John Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism* (New York, 1983), 35–111, examines positive as well as negative traditions. For a careful analysis of the social function of such accusations, see James R. Rives, “Human Sacrifice among Pagans and Christians,” *JRS* 85 (1995): 65–85.

4. “Christian activity is responsible for the preservation of a good deal of ancient source material on Jews that is not available for other ethnic groups in antiquity”; Isaac, *Invention of Racism*, 441.

5. On antiquity’s culture of contention and the ways that this rhetoric affected Christian theology, particularly theology *contra Iudaeos*, see Paula Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism* (New Haven, Conn., 2010), 213–34 and literature cited there.

6. On the ways that early and mid-second-century Christian theologians shaped their constructive as well as their critical views with these concerns in mind, see Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews*, 41–75. For pagan arguments against sacrifice, see Friedo Ricken, *Antike Skeptiker* (Munich, 1994), 53–67.

7. This pattern was first noted in a now-classic essay by David Efroymson, “The Patristic Connection,” in *Anti-Semitism and the Foundation of Christianity*, ed. A. T. Davis (New York, 1979), 98–117.

8. For a review of this argument, see William Horbury, *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy* (Edinburgh, 1998); Judith M. Lieu, *Image and Reality: The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century* (Edinburgh, 1996); and Lieu, “History and Theology in Christian Views of Judaism,” in *The Jews among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire*, ed. J. Lieu, J. North, and T. Rajak (London, 1992), 79–96, and the various essays collected in *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. A. Becker and A. Y. Reed (Tübingen, 2003).

9. So Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia, 2004).

10. Our word “conversion” is problematic in this context because of antiquity’s universal association of “religion”—better, “ancestral practices”—with ethnicity. Ancient Jews and ancient pagans both spoke of this phenomenon of foreigners’ radically affiliating themselves with the Jewish community in terms drawn from political alliances—e.g., Philo, *Special Laws* 1.9.51, and Celsus in *c. Celsum* 5.41. See also Paula Fredriksen, “Mandatory Retirement: Ideas in the Study of Christian Origins Whose

Time Has Come to Go,” *SR* 35.2 (2006): 231–46; and Fredriksen, “Judaizing the Nations: The Ritual Demands of Paul’s Gospel,” *NTS* 56 (2010): 232–52.

11. Some great names in twentieth-century scholarship on Christian anti-Judaism—James Parkes, Bernhard Blumenkranz, Marcel Simon—championed this view of Jewish missionary activity, but it has become an increasingly lonely interpretive position in light of more recent work. Preeminent advocates of this older view currently include Louis Feldman and William Horbury. For arguments against, see below.

12. For an overview of the *status quaestionis*, see James Carleton Paget, “Jewish Proselytism at the Time of Christian Origins: Chimera or Reality?,” *JSNT* 62 (1996): 65–103; against early Jewish missions, Martin Goodman, *Mission and Conversion* (Oxford, 1994); and Paula Fredriksen, “What ‘Parting of the Ways?’” in *Ways That Never Parted*, ed. Becker and Reed, 35–63, and literature cited.

13. Peter Brown notes that “religious coercion on a large scale was mainly practiced by Christians on other Christians,” and goes on to explain how the experience of late Roman Jews differs from this; “Christianization and Religious Conflict,” *Cambridge Ancient History*, ed. A. Cameron and P. Garnsey (Cambridge, 1998), 13:642. On the collaboration of ecclesiastical and imperial law, see also David Hunt, “The Church as a Public Institution,” *Cambridge Ancient History*, ed. Cameron and Garnsey, 13:272–75. On Christian anti-Christian persecution, see also Paula Fredriksen, “Christians in the Roman Empire in the First Three Centuries CE,” in *A Companion to the Roman Empire*, ed. D. Potter (Malden, Mass., 2006), 587–89, 601–3; and Geoffrey E. M. de Ste Croix, *Christian Persecution, Martyrdom, and Orthodoxy* (Oxford, 2006), 201–28. Mutual catholic/Donatist violence is examined and analyzed in Brent Shaw’s recent and definitive study, *Sacred Violence: African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine* (Cambridge, 2011).

14. David Brakke, “Jewish Flesh and Christian Spirit in Athanasius of Alexandria,” *J ECS* 9.4 (2001): 453–81.

15. His arguments survive in Augustine’s rebuttal of them, *c. Faust*; see Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews*, 213–34.

16. Jerome’s most baroque denunciations of Augustine’s “Jewishness” appear in *ep.* 75 of the Augustinian corpus; Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews*, 290–302.

17. See, esp., Robert L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (Berkeley, Calif., 1983); and Christine Shepardson, “Paschal Politics: Deploying the Temple’s Destruction against Fourth-Century Judaizers,” *VigChr* 62 (2008): 233–60.

18. Amnon Linder, *The Jews in the Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages* (Detroit, 1997), collects and comments upon this legislation. See also James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue* (Philadelphia, 1961 [1934]), 174–77.

19. See, esp., Wilken’s comments on this “dispute about religious and communal identity” in the year 387, when 14 Nisan fell on Easter Sunday, *John Chrysostom and the Jews*, 76–79. For Constantine’s fulminations against Quartodecimians, see Eusebius, *VC* 3.18–19; see also notes in Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall, trans., *Eusebius: Life of Constantine* (Oxford, 1999), 269–72.

20. The council of Elvira (pre-Constantinian, though early fourth century) does complain about the same behavior, forbidding intermarriage (c. 16), Christians’ having Jews bless their fields (c. 49), dining with Jews (c. 50), and sexual relations (“adultery”) with Jewish women (c. 78).

21. Günter Stemberger notes that, at least according to the archaeological record in Palestine, these laws evidently had little effect; *Jews and Christians in the Holy Land: Palestine in the Fourth Century* (Edinburgh, 2000), 121–60.

22. The language of this statute of 393, coming within a few years of the destruction of the synagogue at Callinicum, is quite strong: “We are therefore gravely disturbed by the interdiction imposed

in some places on [the Jews'] assemblies. Your Sublime Magnitude [Addeus, the supreme military commander in the East] shall, upon reception of the order, repress with due severity the excess of those who presume to commit illegal acts (*inlicita*) under the name of the Christian religion and attempt to destroy and despoil synagogues." Other statutes protective of Jews and synagogues include 16.8.12 (issued in 397 CE); 8.20 (412 CE; this statute protects synagogues and affirms Jewish exemptions from legal business on Sabbaths and holy days by appeal to long-standing legal precedent); 8.21 (420 CE; protecting both Jewish persons and property, whether private or communal); 8.25 (423 CE; specifically forbidding the quartering of troops in synagogues and ordering compensation for those seized); and 8.26 (423 CE; coupling protective measures with a warning against Jews' circumcising "a man of our faith").

23. On this whole issue, see Amnon Linder, "The Legal Status of the Jews in the Roman Empire," in *Cambridge History of Judaism* (Cambridge, 2006), ed. S. Katz, 4:128–73.

24. On the traditionally Roman aspects of the Christian emperors' fear of heaven, J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz has a particularly good discussion, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford, 1979), 277–308.

25. See, esp., Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianity and Paganism in the Fourth to Eighth Centuries* (New Haven, Conn., 1997).

26. For this dating, see Angelos Chaniotis, "The Jews of Aphrodisias: New Evidence and Old Problems," *SCI* (2002): 209–42, correcting the older analysis of Joyce M. Reynolds and Robert Tannenbaum, *Jews and God-Fearers at Aphrodisias: Greek Inscriptions with Commentary* (Cambridge, 1987). For the implications that this newer dating has for ancient Jewish-Christian relations, see the two essays by Fergus Millar cited below, n. 32.

27. *CTh* 16.8.9 (in 393 CE), 8.12 (in 397 CE), 8.20 (in 412 CE), and 8.25 (in 423 CE).

28. The edition of Severus's letter, by Scott Bradbury, has a long historical introduction; *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews* (Oxford, 1996). See excellent and full analysis in light of imperial law in Friedrich Lotter, "Die Zwangsbekehrung der Juden von Menorca um 418 im Rahmen der Entwicklung des Judenrechts der Spätantike," *HZ* 242.2 (1986): 291–326.

29. See Sivan and Irshai, in this volume; also Daniel Salem, "The Contest over Place and Space: A Comparative Study of Three Episodes of Religious Violence, 363–418 CE" (M.A. thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2012).

30. Jean Juster reviews these incidents of Christians' appropriating or destroying synagogues in *Les Juifs dans l'Empire romain* (Paris, 1914), 1:464 n. 3.

31. Paula Fredriksen and Oded Irshai, "Christian Anti-Judaism: Polemics and Policies," *Cambridge History of Judaism*, ed. Katz, 4:977–1034, at 998–1014 and 1020–27. On Judaism as a "perversity alien to Roman order," see *CTh* 16.8.19.

32. Stephen Mitchell mentions that relations between Jews and heretical Christians continued to be close and complex; *A History of the Later Roman Empire, AD 284–641* (Malden, Mass., 2007), 236. He notes that anti-Jewish persecution, where it occurred, "was sporadic and a product of local conditions, not of systematic policy," 237. Fergus Millar provides two valuable surveys of materials relevant to this question, for both halves of the late empire, in "The Jews of the Graeco-Roman Diaspora between Paganism and Christianity, A.D. 312–438," in *The Jews among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire*, ed. J. North, J. Lieu, and T. Rajak (London, 1992), 97–123; and in Millar, "Christian Emperors, Christian Church, and the Jews of the Diaspora in the Greek East, CE 379–450," *JJS* 55.1 (2004): 1–24. In the latter, Millar considers Jewish anti-Christian violence, which, though less fully attested than Christian anti-Jewish violence, marred social relations in the late Roman city.

33. Fredriksen, "What 'Parting of the Ways,'" 41–56, considers both pagan and Christian Judaizing.

34. The redating of the Aphrodisias inscriptions to this later period, observes Fergus Millar, has

“revolutionary implications” and offers “the occasion for a complete reevaluation of the place of Judaism in the religious map of the Late Roman Christian empire in the East. . . . As soon as we read this document, not as the product of the period when both Christian and Jewish communities lived as tolerated or threatened minorities in an essentially pagan world [the consequences of the earlier, third-century dating], it appears in a wholly new light. . . . It offers a sudden glimpse of religious fluidity in the fourth century, and of an attractive power of Judaism, for which earlier documentary evidence had not prepared us” (“Christian Emperors, Christian Church and Jews,” 17–18).

35. Roger Collins, *Visigothic Spain, 409–711* (Malden, Mass., 2004), provides a good general introduction; see also Peter Heather, *The Goths* (Oxford, 1996). Earlier and valuable is E. A. Thompson, *The Goths in Spain* (Oxford, 1969). James O’Donnell makes the point that this tribe, by the late fourth–early fifth century, had had long experience of the Roman Empire and that it was through this experience (“not from ancestors and time immemorial”) that their identity was distilled and established. “Their success and their resentment of Roman highhandedness—not any shared ethnic identity—made them Visigoths,” *The Ruin of the Roman Empire* (New York, 2008), 84–85; but cf. the cautionary remarks of Peter Heather, “State, Lordship and Community in the West (c. A.D. 400–600),” in *Cambridge Ancient History*, ed. A. Cameron et al. (Cambridge, 2000), 14:440.

36. For saints’ cults, the bishop as its impresario, and aristocratic evocations of *Romanitas*, see Peter Brown’s classic *The Cult of the Saints* (Chicago, 1981). On urban decline and the end of the old, religiously pluralistic concept of *cives*, see J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford, 2001), 247.

37. Michael Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and Its Cities* (Baltimore, 2004), 283. Kulikowski notes that even the Gothic nobles disregarded the claims of the Gothic king Athanagild, who was such an irrelevance “that no one troubled to murder him.” Leovigild, his more considerable successor, established his reign by subduing the peninsula city by city, thereby carving “a new kingdom for himself out of a series of disunited cities and regions that were not in the habit of accepting any authority above the local” (286).

38. The classic study of the Jews in early Spain is Solomon Katz, *The Jews in the Visigothic and Frankish Kingdoms of Spain and Gaul* (Cambridge, Mass., 1937); still valuable, and dating from the same period, is James W. Parkes’s *Church and Synagogue* (New York, 1969), 345–70. More recent bibliography is provided in Scott Bradbury, “The Jews of Spain, c. 235–638,” in *Cambridge History of Judaism*, ed. Katz, 4:517–18.

39. Bradbury, “Jews of Spain,” 512.

40. “With this dramatic act of political theatre, the Hispano-Roman episcopate agreed in effect to underwrite the monarchy’s authority”; Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 285. Reccared needed the assist: four separate rebellions followed his conversion, Catholics often allied with the rebel Goths. Clearly, the denominational issue was subordinate to resistance to the king’s efforts to concentrate power; see Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, 100–109.

41. Constantine ordered “nonorthodox” churches to disband, outlawing their assemblies, exiling their bishops, and burning their books (Eusebius, *HE* 10.5.16, 6.4, 7.2; cf. *CTh* 16.5.1). Legal harassments such as exile or imprisonment often were accompanied by extralegal harassments, such as episcopally orchestrated mob violence. As with pagans, so with “heretics”: emperors were willing to forgo disciplining cities for the violent destruction of property, if that property belonged to pagan or heretical communities. Urban violence, in other words, was domesticated for the purposes both of the imperial government and of the church that it sponsored.

42. Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews*, 353–71. Shaw carefully examines the thick and hateful anti-Jewish rhetoric of Augustine’s sermons, *Sacred Violence*, 260–306, while noting that the targets of

such invective were Christian sectarian rivals, not Jews as such (280, 286, 289, 292, 294–97, 301, 302, 304–6). Unfortunately, Shaw seems to conflate the situation in Minorca with that of North Africa (304, 436–37) even though—as her rightly notes (261, 284, 304)—we can point to no contemporary examples of anti-Jewish violence in North Africa: see Book Forum discussion in *J ECS* 21.2 (2013): 291–309.

43. Metaphors of sickness, e.g., *Against the Judaizers* 1; wolves, 4.1; drunkenness and illicit sex, 1.2, 8.1; Satan's agents, 4.7. "The comparison of the Jews with ravenous wolves is not intended to provide a description of Jewish behavior," Wilken rightly notes. "[I]t is intended to picture the Jews in the worst possible light"; *John Chrysostom and the Jews*, 119. Wilken traces the ways that Chrysostom uses identical rhetoric to characterize Arians, Marcionites, Manichees, etc., 117–22.

44. Augustine rehearsed these points of principle in his response to Jerome's accusations of his Judaizing, *ep.* 82, ca. 405 CE. They appear on the much larger canvas of his work against Faustus, *passim*; and Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews*, 235–59. The Jews' "witness," in Augustine's construction, was directed toward pagans (*Augustine and the Jews*, 324); in the later Middle Ages, Jewish witness transmutes to serving as an example to Christians; see below.

45. Augustine's focus on Psalms 59 was a while in coming and represents a reconceptualization of the myth of Cain and his curse in Genesis 4: see Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews*, 290–352. For the afterlife of this psalm in subsequent medieval teachings on Jews, see Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: The Idea of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (Berkeley, Calif., 1999).

46. Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews*, 354, and n. 1.

47. In *ep.* 53, he observed to his Donatist counterpart that biblical precedent urged that Christian schismatics be punished more harshly than pagan idolators: in Num 16, the earth swallowed Korah and fire rained from heaven: idolatry was never so celestially sanctioned. *Ep.* 93 is a cornucopia of arguments justifying intra-Christian coercion: bad habits need strenuous correction; fear is salubrious; while the New Testament does not give examples of the church appealing to the power of the state, the Old Testament, as Christian Scripture, certainly does; Catholics and Donatists both approve of laws passed against pagans, but schism is worse than idol worship; God provides a model of coercive force when "with great violence" compelled Saul to come into the church.

48. *Quicumque enim eos ita perdiderit* [i.e., by forcing Jews not to live as Jews] *septem vindictas exsolvet, id est, auferet ab eis septem vindictas quibus alligati sunt propter reatum occisi Christi, c. Faust.* 12.12, PL 42: 261; Isidore lifts this passage verbatim in *Quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum: In Genesis* 6.16–18 (ad Gen 4.15): PL 83: 226.

49. See Wolfram Drews, *The Unknown Neighbor: The Jew in the Thought of Isidore of Seville* (Leiden, 2006), 203–39.

50. Herwig Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, trans. T. J. Dunlap (Berkeley, Calif., 1990), 60.

51. On Isidore's later influence, see Judith Herrin, *The Formation of Christendom* (Princeton, N.J., 1987), 245. J. Cohen notes that *De fide* was the earliest extant work to appear translated into medieval German; *Living Letters*, 105 n. 43.

52. Drews, *The Unknown Neighbor*, 195; cf., however, his misconstrual of Augustine's position on Jews and Judaism, 133. Drews notes elsewhere that Isidore's avoidance of the Augustinian view of Ps 59.12 is "striking," 229.

53. Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, 315. Still important is the lengthy essay by Jean Juster (augmented and trans. A. M. Rabello), "The Legal Condition of the Jews under the Visigothic Kings," *Israel Law Review* 11.2–4 (1976): 259–87, 391–414, 563–90 (orig. pub. 1913). Yitzhak Hen opines that "the Visigothic anti-Jewish policy was blown out of all proportion in the second half of the twentieth century," presumably by historians oversensitized by the more recent murder of European Jews; *Roman*

Barbarians (New York, 2007), 127, and n. 10. The laws, as we shall shortly see, and as Thompson says, were dreadful. What we cannot know, as I noted above, is their application and scope, and thus their social consequences.

54. Drews, *The Unknown Neighbor*, 303–4, notes: “The rather imprecise nature of Gothic identity enabled its complete redefinition; the label ‘Gothic’ was now applied to Hispano-Roman traditions after investing them with special religious overtones; in fact, religion became the main code defining the character of the new Gothic ‘nation.’” See also Collins’s reflections on law and ethnic identity, *Visigothic Spain*, 223–46.

55. How did Sisebut implement his law? For a substantial biographical note on the variety of historical conjectures, see Rachel L. Stocking, *Bishops, Councils, and Consensus in the Visigothic Kingdom*, 589–633 (Ann Arbor, Mich., 2000), 125 n. 29; and Hen, *Roman Barbarians*, 132, and n. 33.

56. Juster, “The Legal Condition of Jews,” (pt. 1), 261–75; and Bernard S. Bachrach, “A Reassessment of Visigothic Jewish Policy, 589–711,” *AHR* 78.1 (1973): 11–34.

57. Bradbury, “Jews of Spain,” 513.

58. For the language of these laws, see Linder, *The Jews in the Legal Sources*, 257–332 (secular law), and 484–538 (canons of the councils of Toledo). For a narrative review of the individual canons, see Bradbury, “Jews in Spain,” 514–16; and Parkes, *Church and Synagogue*, 345–70.

59. “It is an extraordinary fact,” Parkes noted in 1934, “that in spite of the immense collection of legislation, Arian and Catholic, secular and conciliar, which the Visigothic period has bequeathed to us, we are almost entirely without knowledge of the conditions of the Jews of the time”; *Church and Synagogue*, 345. In the decades since he wrote this, little has changed. Recently, a cache of Jewish grave inscriptions dating from the Visigothic period has been recovered in Spain; but until they are published, the best we can say is that they attest to the active presence of a Jewish population, somewhat at home with Hebrew, in this period. I thank colleagues Wolfram Drews and Yitzhak Hen for bringing the existence of this cache to my attention.

60. See, e.g., Toledo IV, c. 58.

61. Sisebut’s language, *Leges Visigothorum* 12.2.1.

62. On the “networks of power and obligation” binding Christians and Jews together, see Stocking, *Bishops, Councils and Consensus*, 137; on the varied activities of the Jews in agriculture and trade, see Drews, *Unknown Neighbor*, 127–28 and nn. 552–55.

63. See, esp., Wolfram Drews, “Jews as Pagans? Polemical Definitions of Identity in Visigothic Spain,” *EME* 11.3 (2002): 189–207, on a conciliar canon fretting about baptized Jews who, in collaboration with Christian neighbors, present their neighbor’s children as their own for baptism, “whereas they keep their own offspring as pagans [*sic*] by sinister and nefarious pretence” (191, citing *CCH*, V, 484, lines 286–90).

64. “Only widespread noncompliance with royal and ecclesiastical rulings can explain the survival of Spanish Jewish communities in the face of the draconian measures directed against them”; Bradbury, “Jews in Spain,” 516.

65. Bachrach, “A Reassessment,” 13, 15, 34. Norman Roth finds Bachrach’s proposals “perverse”; *Jews, Visigoths and Muslims in Medieval Spain: Cooperation and Conflict* (Leiden, 1994), 10.

66. Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, 316, contrasting Visigothic policy to that of Franks and Byzantines; so also J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Early Medieval History* (Oxford, 1975), 6.

67. Hagith Sivan, “The Invisible Jews of Visigothic Spain,” *REF* 159.3–4 (2000): 380, 385.

68. Heather, “State, Lordship,” 440. My remarks in the paragraph above draw substantially on Heather’s article, as well as Collins’s description of this process in *Visigothic Spain*.

69. Though we should ask to what degree the Visigoths constructed royal authority and power

as a heritable category: their monarchy was elective. See Collins, *Visigothic Spain*, 87; and P. D. King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom* (Cambridge, 1972), 62–64.

70. See Bachrach's useful chart, "A Reassessment," 12. Hen observes that this record of violent regime change is no worse than that of the Merovingians in Gaul; *Roman Barbarians*, 126.

71. Are these changes (more benign) "transformation," or (more traumatic) "decline and fall"? I incline to the darker view; see, esp., Bryan Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization* (Oxford, 2005); and Peter Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (London, 2005). For a brisk historiographical overview of this question, see Hen, *Roman Barbarians*, 1–26. See also O'Donnell's energetically revisionist view of this period in *The Ruin of the Roman Empire*, wherein the Ostrogoth Theodoric emerges as one of the last and best of the Roman emperors ("Part 1: The Empire That Hadn't Fallen, 476–527 CE"), 47–174.

72. So similarly Drews, *The Unknown Neighbor*, 300.

73. On the lack of interest in heresy shown in Visigothic sources, see Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, 155. On the Visigoths' investing traditional Catholic anti-Judaism with political significance, see Drews, *The Unknown Neighbor*, 298–305. He notes that anti-Jewish rhetoric, after 589 CE, served the larger goal of political unification (299) and that "when the distinction of the three groups Goths, Catholics, and Jews was replaced by the binary system Catholic Goths versus Jews, the political scene became much more religiously determined than before" (304). During Toledo IV (in 633 CE), Isidore "referred to a single *gens et patria* . . . without any suggestion that there might be different *gentes* within one *patria*"; Collins, *Visigothic Spain*, 244.

74. Collins, *Visigothic Spain*, 235–46; on the troubles after 654 and 681 CE and the anti-Jewish legislation that coincides with them, 235–37.

75. On the literary afterlife of Isidore of Seville's *de fide catholica contra Iudaeos*, see, esp., Drews, *Unknown Neighbor*, 1–5. This is the work, otherwise much influenced by Augustine, wherein Isidore does *not* cite Augustine's teachings on Jewish witness; Drews, *The Unknown Neighbor*, 195. J. Cohen, oddly, states the opposite; *Living Letters*, 95. Drews observes that "Isidore's treatise remained one of the most important sources for authors of anti-Jewish works" until the High Middle Ages, when churchmen began shifting tactics and concentrating on the Talmud and other rabbinic writings for their polemics (3).

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CONTRIBUTORS

William Adler is Professor of Religious Studies at North Carolina State University. His publications include *Time Immemorial: Archaic History and Its Sources in Christian Chronography from Julius Africanus to George Syn-cellus* (1989); *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity* (with J. VanderKam, 1996); *The Chronography of George Synkellos* (with P. Tuffin, 2002); *Iulius Africanus, Chronographiae: The Extant Fragments* (with M. Wallraff, 2007); and *Iulius Africanus: Cesti* (with M. Wallraff et al., 2012).

Beth A. Berkowitz is Ingeborg Rennert Associate Professor of Jewish Studies in the Department of Religion at Barnard College. Her first book, *Execution and Invention: Death Penalty Discourse in Early Rabbinic and Christian Cultures*, won the Salo Baron Prize for Outstanding First Book in Jewish Studies. Her most recent book is *Defining Jewish Difference: From Antiquity to the Present* (2012).

Ra'anan Boustán is Associate Professor in the Department of History at UCLA. He is the author of *From Martyr to Mystic: Rabbinic Martyrology and the Making of Merkavah Mysticism* (2005). In addition, he has coedited four volumes, most recently *Jewish Studies at the Crossroads of Anthropology and History* (2011).

Hannah M. Cotton is Professor of Classics and Ancient History and holder of the Shalom Horowitz Chair in Classics at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She is a former editor of *Scripta Classica Israelica* (1991–2004) and of the Greek documents on papyrus from Masada and the Judaean Desert (1989–97). Currently, she is the coordinating editor of the ongoing project *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae (CIIP)*, of which the Jerusalem and Caesarea volumes have recently appeared (2010–2012).

Natalie B. Dohrmann is the Associate Director of the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, where she also teaches in the Department of Religious Studies and the Jewish Studies Program. In addition to authoring articles on Jewish literature and law in the Roman world, she edited *Jewish Biblical Interpretation and Cultural Exchange: Comparative Exegesis in Context* (with D. Stern, 2008). She is also the Executive Editor of the *Jewish Quarterly Review*.

Paula Fredriksen is the Aurelio Professor of Scripture emerita at Boston University and Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Among her many books are *From Jesus to Christ* (1988; 2000); *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews* (winner of the 1999 National Jewish Book Award); and *Augustine and the Jews* (2010). Her Spenser Trask Lectures for Princeton University have just appeared as *Sin: The Early History of an Idea* (2012).

Oded Irshai is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Jewish History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Recent publications include *Jews in Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority* (with R. Bonfil, G. Stroumsa, and R. Talgam, 2012) and “Follow the Wise”: *Studies in Jewish History and Culture in Honor of Lee I. Levine* (with Z. Weiss, J. Magness, and S. Schwartz, 2010).

Hayim Lapin is Professor of History and Robert H. Smith Professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Maryland. Major publications include *Early Rabbinic Civil Law and the Social History of Roman Galilee* (1995); *Economy, Geography, and Provincial History in Later Roman Palestine* (2001); and *Rabbi as Romans: The Rabbinic Movement in Palestine 100–400 CE* (2012).

Joshua Levinson is Associate Professor in the Department of Hebrew Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Recent publications include *The Twice-Told Tale: A Poetics of the Exegetical Narrative in Rabbinic Midrash* (2005) and “From Narrative Practice to Cultural Poetics: Literary Anthropology and the Rabbinic Sense of Self” (2012). He is an editor of *Jerusalem Studies in Hebrew Literature*.

Ophir Münz-Manor is a senior lecturer in rabbinic culture in the Department of History, Philosophy, and Judaic Studies at the Open University of

Israel. He has published extensively on late antique Jewish and Christian liturgy and hymnography. His two most recent works are *Ancient Piyyut: An Annotated Anthology* (2013) and *The Liturgical Poetry of Elazar Birabi Qilir for Hanukkah: A Critical Edition* (with Michael Rand, 2013).

Annette Yoshiko Reed is M. Mark and Esther K. Watkins Assistant Professor in the Humanities in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. She is the author of *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity* (2005), and she has coedited four volumes, including *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (with Adam H. Becker, 2003).

Hagith Sivan is Professor in the Department of History at the University of Kansas. She is the author of six books, including *Ausonius of Bordeaux: Genesis of a Gallic Aristocracy* (1993); *Between Woman, Man and God: A New Interpretation of the Ten Commandments* (2004); and *Palestine in Late Antiquity* (2008).

Michael D. Swartz is Professor of Hebrew and Religious Studies at the Ohio State University. He is the author of *The Signifying Creator: Nontextual Sources of Meaning in Ancient Judaism* (2012); *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (1996); and *Mystical Prayer in Ancient Judaism: An Analysis of Ma'aseh Merkavah* (1992); and coauthor of *Avodah: Ancient Poems for Yom Kippur* (with J. Yahalom, 2005) and *Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts from the Cairo Genizah* (with L. H. Schiffman, 1992).

Rina Talgam is Associate Professor of the History of Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Recent publications include *The Stylistic Origins of Umayyad Sculpture and Architectural Decoration* (2004); *The Mosaics in the House of Dionysos at Sepphoris: Excavated by E. M. Meyers, E. Netzer and C. L. Meyers* (with Z. Weiss, 2004); and *Jews in Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority* (with R. Bonfil, O. Irshai, and G. Stroumsa, 2012).

INDEX OF SELECTED PRIMARY SOURCES

HEBREW BIBLE

Genesis, 132, 251

- 2.8–9 234
- 3.21 192
- 4 261, 341
- 6.4 327
- 13.18 57
- 16 32
- 18.1–16 57
- 22 161, 164, 195, 223
- 27.15 193
- 36.24 290
- 47.29 104

Exodus, 250

- 15.20 327
- 19.19 203
- 22.15 81

Leviticus

- 8.35 327
- 16.3 327
- 16.7–10 232
- 18 30–32, 34–41
- 20 37

Numbers

- 5.18 289
- 6.24–26 180
- 7.3 177–78
- 16 328, 341
- 17 202, 327

Deuteronomy, 250

- 2.5 113
- 16 178
- 17 169, 178
- 30.12–14 34
- 32.52 119
- 33.17 334

Joshua

- 7.19–26 327

2 Samuel

- 15.32 297

1 Kings, 176

- 7 181
- 10 172, 176, 178, 181
- 11.7 297

2 Kings, 176

Isaiah

- 40.12 327
- 44.13 327
- 54 116

Jeremiah

- 3.19 99

Ezekiel, 112, 181

- 1 179
- 5.5 336
- 10–11 179, 298
- 11.22–23 111, 298

Jonah, 109

Habakkuk

- 2.4 33–34

Zechariah, 112

- 14.4 111, 113

Psalms

- 16.9 296
- 51.21 229, 231, 245
- 59 262, 341
- 87.2 240, 245
- 91.1 327
- 98.20 245
- 110.10 35

Job

- 10.3 327

Proverbs

- 1.7 35

- 8.31 327
 21.19 113
 30.19 197, 327
 Song of Songs
 3.7 180
 Ecclesiastes
 7.26 327
 Lamentations
 3.9 108
 Esther
 2.5 84
 Daniel, 69–70
 1.15–19 69
 3 302
 1 Chronicles
 28.5 172
 29.23 172, 176, 180
 2 Chronicles
 9.8 176
 9.17–19 172, 176
 13.8 176
 26.16–21 327
 32.33 104
- APOCRYPHA, PSEUDEPIGRAPHA,
 AND SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH
 LITERATURE
- Artapanus, 67
 2 *Baruch*, 297
 4 *Baruch*, 297
Community Rule (1QS), 70
Damascus Document (CD), 70
 1 *Enoch*, 67
 3 *Enoch*, 324
 4 *Ezra*, 1
 Flavius Josephus, 1, 5–7, 19, 67, 71, 287;
 Jewish Antiquities, 1, 117, 280, 297;
 Jewish War, 1, 57, 297, 335
Halakhic Letter (4QMMT), 70
Jubilees, 67, 70, 191, 235
Letter of Aristeas, 70
 1 *Maccabees*, 1
 2 *Maccabees*, 1, 69
 3 *Maccabees*, 67
 Philo of Alexandria, 30–31, 34, 38, 40, 67,
 71; *On the Migration of Abraham*, 68;
 On the Preliminary Studies, 32–33, 275;
 Special Laws, 337
Rule of the Congregation (1QSa), 70

Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs, 68, 297
Tobit, 67
War Scroll (1QM), 70
Wisdom of Ben Sira, 191, 316

NEW TESTAMENT

Gospel of Matthew, 111, 227
 Gospel of Luke, 19, 58, 227, 297
 Gospel of John, 116, 152, 164
 Book of Acts, 19, 110, 297
 Epistle to the Romans, 33–34, 39
 1 Corinthians, 291
 2 Corinthians, 250
 Epistle to the Galatians, 33, 34, 39, 253
 Epistle to the Hebrews, 154, 232, 233, 248, 336
 Book of Revelation, 1

MISHNAH, TOSEFTA, AND TALMUDIM

Mishnah, 27, 66, 68–70, 79, 81–87, 89–90,
 179, 189, 210
mShekalim
 6.2 297
mYoma, 194
 3.8 290
 4.2 290
 6.2 290
mMegilah
 2.3 290
mYevamot
 15.3 289
mKetubot
 1.8 291
 4.6–12 82, 213
 7.1–5 289, 290
 7.6–8 79–81, 87–89, 289, 290,
 291
 13.3 289
mNedarim
 11.12 290
mSotah
 1.1–2 293
 1.6 85
mGitin
 9.3 289
mBava Metsi'a
 9.3 289

- mBava Batra*
 9.1 289
m'Eduyot
 1.12 289
mAvot, 189–91, 195, 208
 1.1 290
 1.1–2.16 189
 1.2 315
 1.16–2.7 324
 2.8–16 324
mHulin
 7.3–4 69
 Tosefta, 27, 79, 84–88, 90, 210
tMegilah
 3.22 223
tKetubot
 4.8–12 289
 5.10 289
 7.6–7 84, 86, 289, 291
 7.7 288, 291–92
tSotah, 87
 1.1–20 293
 4.7 296
 5.9 84–85, 87, 289, 292
 11.1 327
tBava Metsi'a
 9.10–13 289
tNidah
 6.9 291
 Talmud Yerushalmi, 27, 79, 88–91
yBerakhot
 2.3 296
 4.3 296
 5.1, 9a 223
 9.1, 13b 109
yTerumot
 8.5, 45c 293
yMa'aser Sheni
 5.2, 56a 108
yTa'anit
 2.1, 65a 104
yMo'ed Katan
 2.2, 81b 105–6
yYevamot
 15, 14d 289
yKetubot
 4.6, 29a 289
 5.9, 30b 292
 7.5, 31a 291
 7.6–7, 31b–c 88–89, 288, 291,
 292
ySotah
 1.7, 17a 292
yKidushin
 4.4, 65d 292
ySanhedrin
 2.6, 20c 323
y'Avodah Zarah
 1.2, 39c 176–77
 1.4, 39d 57
 2.3, 41a 293
 Talmud Bavli, 2, 177, 194, 292,
 295
bBerakhot
 26b 223
 54a 117
bShabat
 56b 323
bRosh ha-Shanah
 31a 113
bTa'anit
 5a 247
 9a 327
 16a 104
 23b 104
 27b 155
bMegilah
 11a 323
 15b 290
 29a 333
bMo'ed Katan
 28a 327
bYevamot
 24b–25a 292
 65b 290
bKetubot
 72a 288–91
bSotah
 13b 118
 34b 104
 40a 283
bGitin
 68b 323
bKidushin
 12b 290
bBava Kama
 16b 104
 38a 276
 82a 292
bBava Metsi'a
 85b 104
 114a 289

bBava Batra

73b–74a 120

75a 300

bSanhedrin

19b 290

20b 323

21b 323

37a 335

59a 276

b'Avodah Zarah

3a 276

26a 290

Avot de R. Nathan A, 113, 267, 324*Avot de R. Nathan B*, 267, 324

MIDRASHIM

Mekhilta de R. Yishmael, 66, 113, 296, 298*Mekhilta de R. Shimon bar Yohai*, 315*Sifra*, 27, 30, 37, 39–40, 68, 289*Sifre Numbers*, 289*Sifre Deuteronomy*, 63, 99, 108, 118, 283, 322, 327*Genesis Rabbah*, 66, 99, 104, 192, 267, 283, 285, 290*Exodus Rabbah*, 180, 181, 323*Leviticus Rabbah*, 290, 295, 323*Numbers Rabbah*, 290, 292, 323*Deuteronomy Rabbah*, 113, 298*Song of Songs Rabbah*, 283, 323*Lamentations Rabbah*, 103, 104, 267, 290, 295*Ecclesiastes Rabbah*, 296, 323*Esther Rabbah*, 179, 290, 323*Pesikta de Rav Kahana*, 105, 112, 113, 115–16, 177–79, 296–97*Midrash Tanhuma Buber*, 112, 193; *Vayehi*,104; *Toledot*, 12, 326; *Shemot*, 298;*Mishpatim*, 99; *Emor*, 290; *Korah*, 300;*Devarim*, 298*Midrash Tanhuma, Emor*, 290*Midrash Psalms*, 296*Midrash Proverbs*, 267*Pirke de R. Eliezer*, 295*Midrash Lekah Tov Pesikta Zutrata*, 119*Midrash Eser Galuyot*, 119

PIYYUTIM

Anonymous Poems on the Binding of Isaac,
161–64*Seder 'Avodah piyutim*, 157–60, 166, 190, 194–96, 200, 204–5, 207–8, 316–18; *Atah**barata*, 194–96, 200–201, 208, 326;*Atah konanta 'olam me-rosh*, 156, 194, 196,201–2, 208; *Az be-en kol*, 195, 197, 200,202, 203, 327; *Shiv'at yamim*, 194–95

Yannai, 110, 208

Yose ben Yose, 208, 318; *Atah konanta 'olam*
be-rov hesed, 195–96; *Az be-da'at hakar*,197, 326; *Azkir gevurot*, 203, 204; *Sidre**'avodah*, 316OTHER HEBREW AND ARAMAIC
SOURCES*Baraita de-melekheth ha-mishkan*, 226*Book of Medicines of Asaph the Physician*, 190*Seder 'olam*, 297*Sefer ha-razim*, 190*Targum sheni*, 171CLASSICAL, PATRISTIC, AND OTHER
SOURCES*Acts of Sharbil*, 49, 279

Ambrose of Milan, 255–56, 296

Apostolic Canons, 254

Apostolic Constitutions, 156–60, 205, 228, 317Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 90, 292

Athanasius of Alexandria, 253

Augustine of Hippo, 6, 253, 261, 265–66,

341, 343; *City of God*, 106, 261, 296;*Confessions*, 134, 255, 296; *Contra**Faustum*, 257, 261, 338, 341; *Epistles*,135, 144, 257, 303, 305, 310, 338, 341; *On**Lying*, 134Bardaisan, 3–8, 52, 54–56, 61–62; *Book of the**Laws of Countries*, 53, 54, 55, 62, 277*Book of Ceremonies*, 172–73, 175, 321*Breviary of Alaric*, 259

Canons of Chalcedon, 254

Canons of Laodicea, 254

Cassius Dio, 53, 54, 86, 291

Choricius, *Laudatio Marciani*, 229*Chronicle of Edessa*, 277, 279*Chronicon Paschale*, 281

Clement of Alexandria, 6, 27, 190;

Paedagogue, 275, 291; *Stromateis*, 30,

34–37, 39, 275

- Commodian, *Instructiones*, 258
 Constantine of Antioch, *Christian Topography*, 234
 Corippus, 174–75; *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 174, 322
 Cyril of Alexandria: *Epistles*, 232, 315; *On Worship in Spirit and Truth*, 258; *Quod unus sit Christus*, 233
 Cyril of Jerusalem, 149; *Catecheses*, III, 114, 297
 Cyril of Scythopolis, *Life of Sabas*, 334
Didascalia apostolorum, 86, 104, 105, 291
 Dio Chrysostom, *Orations*, 55, 291
Diognetus, 297
Doctrina Addai, 49–50, 279
 Ephraem, 206; *Hymn against Heresies*, 205–6, 277
 Epiphanius, 45, 54; *Panarion*, 45–46, 54, 278, 280, 282, 303
Epistula Severi, 129–35, 257, 303, 304
Epistle of Barnabas, 232
 Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists*, 52
 Eusebius of Caesarea, II, 19, 62, 103, 148, 153, 190, 227, 312; *Demonstratio evangelica*, 100, III; *Ecclesiastical History*, 43, 48, 51, 58, 62, 138, 148, 228, 245, 280, 281, 282, 298, 340; *Laus Constantini*, 295; *Life of Constantine*, 57, 115, 297, 338; *Onomasticon*, 281; *Praeparatio evangelica*, 62; *Quaestiones ad Stephanum et Marinum*, 62
 Evagrius Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History*, 106
 George Syncellus, 59, 278, 279, 280, 281
 Germanus I, *Historia mystagogica*, 236
 Gregory of Nyssa: *Epistles*, 110; *Life of Moses*, 315; *On Pilgrimage*, 107
 Herodotus, 20, 48, 117
 Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, 278
Historia Augusta, 86; *Alexander Severus*, 291; *Aurelian*, 53, 278; *Hadrian*, 291; *Marcus Antonius*, 291
 Homer: *Iliad*, 190, 194; *Odyssey*, 56
 Hydatius, *Chronicle*, 129
 Isidore of Seville, 262, 341, 343; *De fide catholica contra Iudaeos*, 262, 341; *Quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum: In Genesin*, 341
Itinerarium burdigalense, 100, 235
Itinerarium Egeriae, 100, 114, 116–19, 126, 228, 297, 300
 Jerome, 57, 115, 240, 253, 298; *Adversus Jovinianum*, 280; *Apology*, 117; *Commentariorum in Ezechielem*, 335; *Commentariorum in Ieremiam*, 299; *Commentariorum in Zachariam*, 280; *De viris illustribus*, 282; *Epistles*, 101, 109, 114, 135, 336; *Praefatio in Librum Paralipomenon*, 336
 John Chrysostom, 155, 227, 253, 256, 260–61; *Adversus Iudaeos*, 227, 333, 341; *Expositiones in Psalmos*, 155; *Homiliae in epistulam ad Hebraeos*, 233
 John of Nikiu, 143, 147; *Chronicle*, 138, 310, 313
 Julian, *Contra Galilaeos*, 103
 Julius Africanus, 43–47, 51–52, 56–62; *Cesti*, 46, 47, 48, 59–60, 277, 278, 280–82; *Chronographiae*, 278–81; *Epistle to Aristides*, 62
Justinian Code, 254, 256
 Justin Martyr, 6, 11, 19, 252; *Dialogue with Trypho*, 232, 251, 252
 Juvenal, 5; *Satires*, 293
Leges Visigothorum, 342
 Leo I, *Sermons*, 206–7
 Liudprand of Cremona, 168, 173–74; *Retribution*, 167–68, 319
 Lucian, 44, 119; *Double Indictment*, 277; *Salaried Posts in Great Houses*, 52; *Scythian*, 48; *Toxaris*, 48; *True Story*, 118
 Mark the Deacon, *Vita Prophryi*, 123–27, 136
Martyrdom of Barsamya, 51, 279
 Michael Psellus, 59; *Opusculum*, 281
 Moses of Chorene, 50–52; *History of the Armenians*, 52, 279–80
 Origen, 6, 58–59, 135; *Contra Celsum*, 298, 337; *Homiliae in Leviticum*, 108
 Palladius, *Dialogus de vita S. Iohannis Chrysostomi*, 314
Passion of Saints Sergius and Bacchus, 296
 Paulinus of Nola, *Epistles*, 114, 299
 Pausanias, *Guide to Greece*, 117
 Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists*, 286
 Phlegon of Tralle, *Book of Marvels*, 299
Pilgrim of Piacenza, 118, 119
 Pliny the Elder, 86, 292
 Plutarch, 86; *Greek Questions*, 291; *Lives*, *Marcus Cato*, 292; *Roman Questions*, 291
 Porphyry: *De abstinence*, 55, 61; *Life of Plotinus*, 52; *On the Styx*, 280
 Quintilian, 86; *Institutions of Oratory*, 86

Romanos, 165–66

Sirmondian Constitutions, 145, 147, 310–11

Socrates, 138–44, 146–53, 307, 309, 311–13, 315;
Ecclesiastical History, 138–39, 145, 147,

150, 151–52, 307, 308, 309, 313, 314

Sophronius, *Commentarius liturgicus*, 236, 248

Sozomen, 148, 152–53, 312; *Ecclesiastical*

History, 45, 57, 106, 112, 125, 148, 281, 315

Stobaeus, *Anthologium*, 280

Strabo, 5; *Geography*, 48

Synesius, 307

Syrian Hymn for the Cathedral of Edessa, 229,
236

Tatian, 6, 44

Tertullian, 6, 232, 252, 258, 334

Theodoret, *Historia religiosa*, 302

Theodosian Code, 139, 145, 147, 254–56, 263,
305, 307, 308, 310–13, 339, 340

Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 281

Thucydides, 20

Valerius Maximus, 5

Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, 278

Zosimus, *Historia nova*, 53, 278

DOCUMENTARY PAPYRI

P.Beit Israel 330

P.Mur. 19 289

P.Mur. 20 209, 289, 330

P.Mur. 21 209, 289, 330

P.Mur. 113 331

P.Mur. 114 331

P.Mur. 115 213, 289, 330

P.Mur. 116 213, 289, 330

P.Dura 28 49, 279

P.Hever 65 82–83, 209–12, 216, 289, 292, 329

P.Hever 69 213, 289, 330

P.Nessana 16 210

P.Nessana 18 209, 211–15, 218, 329

P.Nessana 20 209, 213–15, 329

P.Oxy 1241 279

P.Petra 210

P.Yadin I 18. See *P.Hever* 65

P.Yadin 27 210

P.Yadin I 37. See *P.Hever* 65

P.Yadin II 10 83, 209, 289, 330

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